14137B
SHERROD LIB
PERIOD DEPT
E TENN ST UNIV
JOHNSON CITY TN 37601
-2
0879
JAN 2 5 1979

The Nation.
January 27, 1979 $1

EDITORIAL

BOUNCING BELLA

The peremptory sacking of Bella Abzug from her post as co-chairman of the National Advisory Committee on Women was wrong if only in its symbolism. During a meeting between the President and the women's committee, Abzug was reported to have affronted the President by "lecturing" to him and employing "confrontation" politics. The source of Abzug's anger was the severe cuts in social and health programs in the upcoming budget, which, she rightly argued, will have a particularly deleterious effect upon working women.

Abzug has been called "abrasive" before, a trait for which she has been punished by New York voters. Apparently, however, between Abzug's abrasiveness and the frustiness of George Meany, with whom Carter met the same day, he chose to be offended by the former. Perhaps he should have hired Marabel Morgan.

He can't fire Meany, of course, but Abzug he could and did, and the members on the advisory committee who later protested had no choice. Having had to wait weeks for an appointment with the President (they had rejected an earlier White House offer of a quickie fifteen-minute meeting), the committee members may have already been having their doubts about the seriousness with which the President took their advocacy. Their premature press release might be considered bureaucratically tactless, but if the President's brother is allowed complete freedom of expression, perhaps the sisters should have occasional license too.

The only bright spot in the way the White House handled Abzug's ouster was that Hamilton Jordan, who personally conveyed the President's displeasure to her, was not drinking Amaretto and cream at the time.

MARXISM U.S.A.

IDEOLOGICAL CONFORMITY
Noam Chomsky

HOUSE MARXISTS
Ellen Schrecker

MARX'S FATE
Marshall Berman

NARCISSISM
Jackson Lears

SEXUALITY
Sherry Turkle

PRESIDENT HAIG?

OPERATION OP-ED

MOBIL NEWS THAT'S FIT TO PRINT

ROBERT SHERRILL

One of the longest-running propaganda acts in town belongs to the Mobil Oil Corporation. The act owes its life to oodles of money (naturally) and *The New York Times*. I don't mean that *The New York Times* was a natural parent, but *The Times* did provide the facilities where the conception could occur and then became a kind of godfather for the offspring.

Mobil spends more than $20 million a year through its propaganda office. Most of this winds up paying for some of public television's cultural soap operas and for idea ads (not product ads) strategically placed on the editorial pages of the nation's major newspapers. The soap operas are the equivalent of an occupying army's distribution of candy and cigarettes. As Herman J. Schmidt, a top Mobil official, once explained, "A reader sees a Mobil message, and associates it with Big Oil. So he may be wary. But he also associates it with the company that brings him *Upstairs, Downstairs*, so maybe he's a little more open-minded and a little more receptive." Another Mobil P.R. official, Raymond D'Argenis, was even more candid: "These programs," he said, "build enough acceptance to allow us to get tough on substantive issues."

The public telly soap operas are for softening the general middle-class populace, but the newspaper propaganda blitz is for conquering the so-called opinion-shaping stratum. (Or so one is supposed to assume.) Planning of the blitz began in 1969, after

(Continued on Page 71)

ETSU LIBRARY
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS.

ABORTION CONTINUED

New Richmond, Ohio

Aryeh Neier ["Theology and the Constitution," *The Nation*, Dec. 30] omitted reference to one kind of "clear secular legislative purpose" for the abortion exemption from Medicaid that would seem rather obvious to many. Namely, . . . to provide health insurance that covers medically pathological conditions such as injury, disease, or malfunction but not medical expenses arising from nonpathological conditions, as for cosmetic surgery. I cannot imagine that the Congress, the courts, or the medical profession would consider pregnancy per se to be medically pathological. There are also some longstanding "principles of insurance," such as the proper exclusion of coverage for conditions that are voluntarily induced, or in which the presence of the insurance may significantly increase the probability of occurrence of the event insured against. . . .

I am a strong supporter (on social but not constitutional grounds) of free abortion on demand for all who cannot otherwise afford it. One of my concerns here is that by reaching far afield for constitutional support in issues like this we may seriously weaken our credibility in insisting on relatively strict construction when it becomes really crucial. *Alfred Kuhn*

New York City

The distinction Mr. Kuhn draws between medically pathological and nonpathological conditions is certainly one that Congress could have made in determining what should be covered by Medicaid. It chose not to do so. In some states, Medicaid funds may be used for such cosmetic treatments as hair transplants and, of course, as I pointed out, Medicaid pays for pregnancy when it eventuates in childbirth. As the law now stands, however, Congress has forbidden payment for abortions even when they are medically necessary to relieve pathological conditions.

Aryeh Neier

New York City

I was glad to see that *The Nation* caught the significance of the importance of the *McRae* case, but totally appalled by the implications of Aryeh Neier's editorial position.

Neier seems to think that the pro-abortion viewpoint is somehow less a "theological" position than that of the anti-abortionists who belong to one of the historic churches. Yet most scholars would not distinguish any longer between the value systems of theists and the value systems of nontheists in a constitutional context. . . . How can he assume that one set of values creates unconstitutional standing for a law just because those values are theist rather than nontheist? Does he believe the Constitution establishes secular humanism as our state "theology"?

Also, what are the implications of this view? Will Jewish religious organizations be forbidden to advocate laws favorable to the state of Israel, or the needs of their communities regarding animal slaughter or Sabbath closings. . . ? Will the Baptists and Methodists be forbidden to speak out on laws concerning the sale of liquor? Or will the Quakers' involvement in the promotion of peace be declared to taint any peace treaty they support?

I can hardly believe that Neier's position reflects the consensus of *The Nation*'s subscribers. The notion that a man's theology constitutionally taints any law which he advocates is too abhorent to the concept of a pluralistic democracy to stand. *Joseph R. Peden*

Indianapolis, Ind.

Aryeh Neier's editorial is a breathtaking example of doing what the opposition is taken to task for. Neier denounces the anti-abortion groups for seeking to have the law reflect their theology of human life, and then offers his theology of human life as a basis for public policy.

He says that most Americans do not share the view that actual human lives are terminated by abortion—as if a head count had anything to do with whether the view is true. He does not refute the position; he disregards it, assuming that an unborn represents "merely a potential human life." This distinction between "potential" and "actual" human life is as theoretical and undemonstrable as any Roman Catholic theorizing about "souls" or "salvation." In fact, I do not see how, aside from such wordplay, it can be denied that the unborn represent actual human lives. I am disturbed to see people who presumably objected to defining blacks in the United States or the opposition in Vietnam as other than human so that they could be gotten rid of, setting out to define away the humanity of the unborn for the same purpose.

. . . Are there compelling reasons to accept selective killing of the unborn? Two reasons are current—women's need to participate as fully as men in the public life and private satisfaction of our society, and the great need to reduce the strain placed on our resources and institutions by overpopulation. Both considerations are weighty. The second may be conclusive.

In any event, it is at this level that discussion is needed, and not at the indeterminable level of at what point in its continuous development a human being is given a soul or is deemed to have moved from potential to actual. None of us is going to be able to be what we mean by human if the planet gets much more crowded. If we face up to abortion as killing, we may be inspired to find other ways to meet the desperate need to lower the birthrate. We may also be forced to decide that the need is critical enough to call for desperate solutions. *J.M. Matthew*

Carroll, Ohio

Abortion does terminate life. The life of an animal begins with conception; human life is no exception. . . . The right of a woman to choose to abort the life in process within her cannot hinge upon whether or not it is a living human being that is about to be killed. What is in question is the right of governments to make laws stating when a human life may be taken.

Traditionally, governments have determined which crimes would be capital or which enemy was to be killed. The right of a democratic government to take a life can be denied only by a consensus of the people. . . . All humanist and secular arguments favor a woman's right to choose abortion. The consensus, right or wrong, religiously influenced or not, will decide the issue.

Cecil P. Roberts

MINNESOTA CORRECTION

Palo Alto, Calif.

My editorial "Minnesota Peasants' Revolt" [*The Nation*, Dec. 9] contains a typographical error. Prof. Wendell Bradley, in a cost analysis of a 427-mile, high voltage power line being constructed by Minnesota power co-ops, charges that "there would appear to be a *$250* million cost overrun which cannot be attributed to normal escalation or unexpected costs." Unfortunately, *The Nation* printed the cost overrun figure as *$25* million. The larger figure, of course, is an indication of much graver mismanagement of Federally controlled loans by the Cooperative Power Association and United Power Association. . . . *Hank Nuwer*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONTENTS.

Volume 228, No. 3

COVER
Editorial: Bouncing Bella
Operation Op-Ed:
Mobil News That's Fit to Print *Robert Sherrill*

LETTERS
66

EDITORIALS
67 President Haig?
68 Style Notes
68 *The Nation*'s Ad Policy
70 *Second Thoughts* *Carey McWilliams*

ARTICLES
75 Bad Weapons Never Die:
Onward and Upward
With the GBU-15 *James Barron*
77 Waiting for Lefty:
Ideological Conformity in America *Noam Chomsky*
81 Socialists in Academe:
The House Marxists *Ellen Schrecker*

BOOKS & THE ARTS
85 Seigel: Marx's Fate *Marshall Berman*
91 Lasch: The Culture of Narcissism *Jackson Lears*
92 Foucault: The History of Sexuality *Sherry Turkle*

Drawings by Ed Koren

Editor, Victor Navasky

Executive Editor, Richard Lingeman; *Literary Editor*, Elizabeth Pochoda; *Poetry Editor*, Grace Schulman; *Copy Editor*, Patricia Dowling; *Assistant Copy Editor*, Sydne Silverstein; *Assistant Editor*, Kai Bird; *Editorial Assistants*, Karen Wilcox, Amy Wilentz; *Editorial Secretary*, Ola Lyon.

Departments: *Art*, Lawrence Alloway; *Architecture*, Jane Holtz Kay; *Dance*, Nancy Goldner; *Films*, Robert Hatch; *Indigenous Music*, Nat Hentoff; *Music*, David Hamilton; *Press*, Richard Pollak; *Television*, Peter Sourian; *Theater*, Harold Clurman; *White House Correspondent*, Robert Sherrill. *Correspondents*: *Latin America*, Penny Lernoux; *London*, Raymond Williams; *Paris*, Claude Bourdet; *Bonn*, C. Amery; *Canberra*, C.P. Fitzgerald. *Columnists*: Carey McWilliams, Calvin Trillin. *Contributing Editor*, Blair Clark. *Editorial Board*: James Baldwin, Norman Birnbaum, Richard Falk, Frances FitzGerald, Philip Green, Sidney Morgenbesser, Aryeh Neier, Marcus Raskin, A.W. Singham, Alan Wolfe.

Publisher, Hamilton Fish

Advertising Manager, Susan Ellen Heitler; *Business Manager*, Ann B. Epstein; *Circulation Manager*, Gloria Sangster; *Assistant to Publisher*, Karen Polk; *Staff*, John Holtz, Greta Loell; *Nation Associates*, Claudine Bacher. *Nation News Service*, Joanne Grant.

The Nation is published weekly (except for the first week in January, and biweekly in July and August) by Nation Enterprises and © 1978 in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 333 Sixth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10014. Tel.: 212-242-8400. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices.

Subscription Price: One year, $21; two years, $37. Student rate $15 a year. Add $3 per year postage for Canada and Mexico; $5 other foreign. All foreign subscriptions must be paid in equivalent U.S. funds.

Change of Address: It is essential that subscribers ordering a change of address give four weeks' notice and provide their old as well as their new address. Please give zip code numbers for both addresses.

EDITORIALS.

President Haig?

When an American military man gets the Presidential bug, watch out. When that man is Alexander Meigs Haig Jr., man the lifeboats, for the ship of state is in trouble, and there is a pack of icebergs ahead.

General Haig, currently Supreme Commander of NATO and of United States forces in Europe, has announced that he will give up those posts and retire from the service on June 30. And there have been signals from him and his friends that he is thinking politically, and in very ambitious terms. *The Boston Globe* ran a story on December 23 about a meeting Haig had in Boston with some Republican political and other influential types under the headline "Was Haig on Stump During Hub Visit?" The burden of Haig's talk that night, according to those who were there, was "how we are deteriorating as a world power."

General Haig is by far the most political of the recent crop of military men. That is, he knows the workings of the executive branch better than anyone of this military generation or any before it. And he has worked in it as a ruthless and formidable political operative. He learned that art and those wiles at the knees of Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon, two exemplary teachers. Starting there as a humble colonel taking notes at National Security Council meetings, an assistant to Kissinger, he rose through the ranks, so to speak, becoming a full general in four years. And, of course, when Nixon threw Haldeman to the wolves, his place in the doomed sleigh was briskly taken by Haig, with the unpleasant title of chief of staff (to the President, not the Army). It was Gerald Ford who jumped him still further up the list of Army promotables and sent this political fixer, in and out of uniform, to command in Europe.

Despite this country's strong old tradition of civilian supremacy over the military, the electorate has always had a certain weakness for soldiers as President. A handful of them, of varying degrees of professionalism, reached the highest office, all but Eisenhower in the 19th century. But they all had some kind of glamour from their military exploits, and this cannot be said of Haig. As a soldier he had an unspectacular record, mainly a succession of staff jobs under powerful patrons. He learned as an aide to General MacArthur in the Korean War how to get medals wholesale, and he put the lesson to good use in Vietnam where he briefly commanded a brigade.

The Sherrod Library
EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
JAN 25 1979
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

So Alexander Haig cannot present himself to the American electorate as the embodiment of any shared heroic experience on the field of battle, as did Grant and Eisenhower successfully and McClellan and MacArthur unsuccessfully. What he must have in mind, then, if he is indeed preening himself politically, is an ideological campaign.

The idea would be that the United States is "losing" a world that it can win in only one way—with military force. The accompanying set of notions would be of the disciplinary sort—that we can only meet the global challenge if this nation is united and tightly mobilized on what would quickly be called the Home Front. Haig learned the ropes of that kind of mobilization as Kissinger's principal agent in the F.B.I. wiretapping of his own staff, an important general and a squad of journalists. He was also the official who told Deputy Attorney General Ruckelshaus to fire Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox because "your Commander in Chief has given you an order." The literature of the late Watergate period shows Haig as a devious figure acting virtually as President during the collapse of the executive authority of Nixon. It was basic training for a coup.

In conventional political terms it is hard to situate a Haig candidacy for the Republican nomination. Ronald Reagan, after all, is the early form front-runner. Congressman Philip Crane of Illinois is trying, with his declared candidacy, to keep Reagan honest (that is, from straying too far into the "moderate" G.O.P. world and thus alloying his old rightism). How much further to the right could Haig place himself?

The answer is that he could if he would position himself 'way out there on the fringe of reactionary hegemonism, to borrow a phrase from the Chinese about the Soviet Unon. Discipline at home and an aggressive posture abroad will always find a certain constituency in this country, and it will be well-heeled. On such a platform General Haig could make a run for it. It would have a certain effect, and an utterly dangerous one.

Style Notes

There have been some style changes bubbling under the surface of *The Nation*, of little interest to readers—e.g., how to spell "theatre" (answer: theater). That sort of thing. We follow *The New York Times* style book, if you must know; and that got us into an anomaly right off, since *The Times* spells the surname of the Iranian royal family Pahlevi, instead of Pahlavi, which was the way we'd been spelling it here, as in an expose last year of the Pahlavi Foundation (December 9, 1978). Imagine our surprise when *The Times* recently published an article on the foundation, calling it throughout the Pahlavi Foundation. The foundation, the story said, had been set up by the Shah's father, Riza Pahlevi. So you see it's not always the path of wisdom to follow *The Times*. Rather than get into a lot of palaver, though, we'll continue to spell it Pahlevi. We suspect both spellings will be (obs.) before long.

A revolutionary change in newspaper orthography did take place recently when the New China News Agency and Reuters announced that they were adopting a new system of transliterating Chinese characters. The system, known as the Pinyin system, more closely approximates the actual Mandarin pronunciation of Chinese names (the spellings now in use were devised by Western missionaries in the 19th century). Thus, Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping becomes Deng Xiaoping; Nanking becomes Nanjing and Tsinan, Jinan. Eight words will retain the old spelling because they are so widely used, or else because the new spelling would be too obscure for Western readers. So Mao Tse-tung will not become Mao Zedong, nor will Tibet be called Xizang—or China Zhongguo, for that matter, even though that's what the Chinese call it.

We'll make our high-level decision on recognition of mainland Pinyin when we know more about it, but in the meantime we wonder if it wouldn't be a service to return the favor to the Chinese by giving them the phonetic spellings of American names. Under our system, which mixes the standard American and Georgian dialects, the President's name would come out Jim-muh Cah-tuh; his wife's, Miz Rho-Xia-linn and his security adviser's, Z-big-niew Brz-ez-inski. The President's brother will be known either as Billuh, or by his Chinese name, which translates, "Number-two-son-who-relieves-himself-like-a-reactionary-peasant-on-capitalist-airfields."

The Nation's Ad Policy

On the occasion of Robert Sherrill's acute analysis of *The New York Times*'s advertising policy toward Mobil (see his cover story), and shortly after Zachary Sklar's question about the propriety of intellectual and liberal publications accepting ads from the National Right to Work Committee (see last week's "The Right-to-Work Lobby")—we thought it appropriate to elaborate our own advertising acceptability criteria for the benefit of our readers and also of prospective advertisers.

In recent months, we have received a number of letters questioning our advertising policy. In particular, some readers were upset about a back cover ad for mink coats and at that time we pointed out:

> Although the relationship of the First Amendment to commercial advertising is complex, we start with a strong presumption against banning advertisers because we disapprove of, or even abhor, their political or social views. But we reserve (and exercise) the right to attack them in our editorial columns.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Nation does not consider itself bound by the standards that must be applied to just any public forum. Our pages are primarily given over to articles that are consistent with the views of the editors. While we also publish articles and letters from readers that diverge from, or even diametrically contradict, the views of the editors, this is not out of a sense that our pages should be open to all or because we believe we are obliged to achieve balance. Whatever we publish appears in the magazine because in our judgment the views expressed deserve to be called to the attention of our readers by us. We are a magazine of limited circulation that enjoys no monopoly on the attention of our readers. They obtain other views in other places, and, through that process, determine for themselves what views to accept or reject.

Advertising is different. We accept it not to further the views of *The Nation* but to help pay the costs of publishing. We start, therefore, with the presumption that we will accept advertising even if the views expressed are repugnant to those of the editors. The only limits are those that grow out of our interest in assuring that the advertising does not impede our use of the editorial columns of *The Nation* to say what we want. Examples of advertising we might reject are those where the typography and layout simulate our editorial format and, thereby, deceive readers; or advertisements that are lurid or typographically ugly or that distort the appearance of *The Nation* by their size, frequency or placement; or that are patently fraudulent, illegal, or libelous in their claims and language. Blatantly misleading ads, or ads purveying harmful products will fall into a gray area of discretion, but as a general principle, we assume that our readers will have sufficient knowledge to judge for themselves the merits of commonly known products (such as cigarettes).

In imposing such limits, we will refrain from making judgments based on our opinions of the particular views expressed in an advertisement. If the purpose of the advertisement is to sell a product or service rather than to express a view, we will allow ourselves greater rein in making judgments about suitability. This reflects our view that commerce is less sacrosanct than political speech.

When we open our pages to political advertising that may be repugnant to the editors, we are furthering our editorial commitment to freedom of speech. Again, our obligation to accept anything in our pages does not derive from principles that must be applied to a public forum. Nor does it rise to the level of obligation that should be felt by a newspaper of general circulation or a television station which either by itself, or with a few others like it, enjoys a monopoly on communication with the general public in a particular community. Our obligation is of a lesser, but still important order: to use space in which we refrain from expressing editorial policy in a way that reflects our editorial commitment to diversity in expression of opinion. (Unlike *The New York Times*, we do not limit our editorial opinions to the narrow confines of two pages. As a journal of opinion, we do not face the certain reduction of space reserved for opinion as does *The Times* when it sells, in the words of Robert Sherrill, "advertising space on the inside of its cranium." On the contrary, corporate political advertising within the limits described can only expand *The Nation*'s "cranium" by enabling us to print many more pages.)

Having said all of that, we invite our readers and prospective advertisers to comment on the policies that govern our acceptance or rejection of advertising and the reasons for these policies. To get the debate rolling, we begin by quoting from none other than Robert Sherrill himself, who writes to protest—well, semi-protest—our statement. Here is what he says:

> *The Nation* and magazines like it are a peculiar part of the press. They are, not exaggerating too much, one great big editorial page. The freedom they claim is not merely freedom of information but freedom of tone, freedom of taste, freedom of sensibilities, freedom of conscience—all wrapped up into one. For an advertiser to claim the "right" to appear in *The Nation*'s pages is to claim that *The Nation* should give up some of its tone, etc.
>
> Daily newspapers claim something of the same freedom, and I think properly. They do not take advertisements for dildos or French ticklers and the like. They leave that kind of ad for publications that cater to that tone. They claim they should be free to maintain a tone of freedom of *general* information. *The Nation* claims that it should be free to maintain a tone of a particular conscience and a particular view of the world. (Or at least *I* think *The Nation* should claim it.) Taking ads from Mobil or Allied Chemical or Georgia Pacific would reduce that tone considerably. If you don't think so, analyze your feelings about some of *The New Republic*'s advertisers or the *Columbia Journalism Review*'s advertisers.
>
> I think it would be unrealistic to expect *The Jewish Monthly* to take ads paid for by Exxon congratulating Arafat on his birthday. I think it would be unrealistic to ask a Catholic publication to take ads from abortion clinics. I don't think their refusing to take such ads has anything to do with freedom of the press, because their commerce in that freedom cuts across a restricted area, just as *The Nation*'s does.
>
> P.S. Of course, if the question is one of survival, then I think Poor Dear Waif should leap at the chance of selling whatever can be sold to that swine, Monsieur Mobil.

Clearly, the whole question is a matter of drawing fine lines and making nice distinctions. Ethics and practicality are interwoven throughout the substance of the issue of how to enable journals of opinion to survive and expand their reach. We do not pretend that troublesome problems are absent from this question. For 114 years *The Nation* was supported by a series of wealthy benefactors, but now it must become self-supporting. It is with this challenge in mind that we invite comment on how we should consider advertising in these pages, both practically and as a matter of moral taste.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SECOND THOUGHTS

CAREY McWILLIAMS

The Jonestown tragedy has triggered a rash of discussion about authoritarian sects and the need to do something about them. Parents kidnap youngsters from sectarian communes and attempt to "deprogram" them, while cult leaders insist that persuasion, not brainwashing, keeps them from their homes. As might be expected, "the cult problem" has led to proposals that new legislation is needed to regulate the use of mind-control techniques by religious or pseudo-religious groups. Various proposals of this kind are now appearing in the law reviews. When confronted with any new social unpleasantness, the pat American reaction, today as yesterday, is "pass a law." If crime rates are rising, the cry goes forth: Make the death sentence mandatory. And so it is with other complex social problems. But oddly enough it never seems to occur to the proponents of new legislation that certain kinds of pathology might be traced to flaws in the society which cannot be remedied by legislative gimmicks.

Consider, for example, some current proposals for dealing with what is called "religious totalism" or authoritarian cults. Included are such measures as a requirement that cult proselytizers identify themselves at an early stage and outline to the candidate exactly what his life will be like should he join the cult; a mandatory cooling-off period in which prospective members would be required to leave the group and reconsider their position; a flat prohibition against proselytizing by groups that utilize intensive psychological indoctrination; and use of the licensing power to forbid unqualified individuals from engaging in psychologically intrusive practices.

But just how can these and similar proposals be reconciled with the First Amendment? Attempts to regulate religious practices by legislative means would create more problems than they could possibly solve. I can imagine few confusions more dense than those likely to arise if Government were asked to define what is and what is not "religion" or to sort out acceptable from unacceptable proselytizing practices. It is argued that the right to constitutional protection, in the case of some of the new sects, is diminished because of insincerity and deception and because thought-control techniques are not essential to the survivial of traditional religious groups.

But what precisely is "thought control"? And what constitutes legitimate group pressure to keep the neophyte in line as distinguished from impermissible methods? If actual force (or intimidation) is being used, the existing laws should be adequate to protect the individual from forceful detention or abuse. If the sect is misusing its tax-exempt status as a "religion," then the I.R.S. should step in to challenge the exemption and audit the books. Admittedly, governmental officials, at all levels, are extremely reluctant about knocking at church doors; religion is a notoriously touchy category and the tendency of officials is to look the other way when complaints about abuses have been registered. This seems to have happened in the case of the People's Church, the Reverend Moon's Unification Church, the Children of God, the Church of Bible Understanding and similar groups. But new legislation is hardly the answer.

What is interesting about the current hue and cry over pseudo-religious cults is the apparent unwillingness, if not active resistance, to investigate what it is, in the society, that gives them a chance to flourish. Obviously there are many factors: the lack of meaningful communication between parents and children; the absence of secular movements that appeal to the idealism of the young; the wretched state of public morale, what with knee-deep and pervasive corruption, horrifying crimes, terrorism, breaches of trust, persistent racism, the defilement of the environment and scarifying accounts of armament measures that raise the specter of wars in space, not to mention a scarcity of jobs that would be attractive to the young in terms of their education and background.

Nor is the appeal of authoritarian sects restricted to the young, although many of the neophytes seem to be white, "educated" youngsters from middle-class homes. As the Jonestown tragedy indicates, other age and racial groups have also been attracted to cults and sects that seek to create new communities in which the members share certain ideals and are dedicated to mutual aid and support. Alienation is a key factor—from the home environment (the family, we are constantly told, is a vanishing social unit), from existing political and social institutions and from society itself. "The familiar forms of organized religion have lost their hold on most people who would call themselves members of the educated middle classes," as *The Economist* pointed out recently. "It is a period of experimentation; and, like all such periods, it is disorderly, hopeful and terrifying." So if new cults and sects are on the increase, as they seem to be, it is for specific reasons; their emergence is a response, however inadequate and perverse, to a real need.

But to think in these terms is unsettling and even frightening; it is much easier to demand new legislation. Enactment of tough new penalties may relieve some of the frustration of middle-class Americans about crime, but will not get at the underlying social causes. In the same way, the authoritarian sects are symptoms and as such they should be closely studied and monitored. But regulation is not the answer, much less attempted suppression or harassment. Offbeat movements based on nontraditional "religious" ideas or values may even help the young in some cases to give direction to their lives.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ARTICLES.

Mobil News

(Continued from Front Cover)

environmentalists and tax reformers had had an especially good run of luck in arousing the public and Congress to consider making Big Oil behave. That was the year, for example, that Congress reduced the oil depletion allowance from 27½ percent to 22 percent. It was also the year of the spectacular Santa Barbara oil spill, after which Congress stiffened the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act of 1953 to make the oil companies liable for cleaning up their messes.

While those pressures were building on the outside, internal corporate changes that would make Mobil more willing to launch a counterattack were also in motion. Rawleigh Warner Jr. was elected chairman and chief executive officer in 1969. Warner, a liberal Republican and old Princeton smoothie, is unusually flexible—not that he is very flexible—for a corporation boss. He knew it was a waste of time to continue buttering up conservatives, as the oil companies had always done. After all, the conservatives were safely in pocket. He decided instead to subvert the middle and the left with guile and lollipops. He chose as his emissary to "the other side of the street," as he put it, a young Mobil labor relations lawyer by the name of Herbert Schmertz, now a Mobil vice president. Schmertz's credentials were just the sort to give him safe-conduct into what Mobil would have once called enemy territory. He had helped in John F. Kennedy's 1960 Presidential campaign, and he had been an advance man for Robert Kennedy's 1968 campaign (taking time off from Mobil to do it). Warner obviously does not exaggerate when he says that one big reason Schmertz was promoted to become Mobil's chief propagandist was his "ability to talk to the Democratic side of the House and the Senate and to know some of those people—particularly some of those people that we never, never would see before—the liberal element of the Democratic side."

Schmertz is usually credited with cooking up the newspaper-ad crusade. But he admits it "was a confluence of people who came together on the idea. I'd say Rawleigh Warner, Bill Tavoulareas [Mobil president], myself, uh, couple of other people, perhaps, had the same feeling. I don't think any one person dragged anybody else. The top management here had the feeling that this is what they wanted to do."

But having decided that they wanted to spend millions propagandizing the American public in a new way, they could find no acceptable format. Just buying any old ad space wouldn't get the job done. They didn't want their stuff buried back among the truss ads and real estate blurbs. They wanted it framed and set apart and treated with journalistic reverence, and they wanted this to happen in the most prestigious newspapers.

And there was no way Mobil could make that scheme come true until, in 1970, *The New York Times* decided to open its Op-Ed (opposite-editorial) page to paid advertising. That was the hole through which Mobil launched its notorious propaganda blitz. Mark down October 19, 1970, as the date *The Times*'s editorial Maginot line fell forever to the corporate dollar. On that day Mobil's first Op-Ed "idea" ad appeared. Others would follow on an irregular basis through 1971, and beginning with January 13, 1972, a Mobil ad has appeared on the Op-Ed page every Thursday, in the lower right-hand corner of the page. Other corporations and organizations buy the same space from time to time—such as Johns-Manville, assuring the world that it is making asbestos fun to work with again; or the National Association of Railroads, telling us what a good job the trains are doing. But it is, despite such intruders, known as Mobil's corner. (The Op-Ed ads were supplemented three years later with a column, called "Observations," which Mobil runs in Sunday supplement magazines, such as *Parade*. But this is a fairly middle-to-lowbrow operation.)

Coincidentally, the same ads that appear in *The Times* are also placed in the editorial sections of other major newspapers. *The Boston Globe*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Chicago Tribune* and *The Los Angeles Times* are the most important of these other outlets, but when an oil issue heats up in Congress, as the divestiture question did in 1976, Mobil will take out ads in more than 100 newspapers. None of these other appearances are nearly so important to Mobil's image, however, as the Op-Ed ads in *The Times*. Its ads in *The Washington Post*, for example, get lost in the Sunday Outlook section, which usually runs eight pages; nobody takes *The Wall Street Journal*'s editorial pages seriously, anyway, for they are notorious company bulletin boards, and not much more important national opinion-shaping can be done in Boston, Chicago, or Los Angeles. *The New York Times* is the key to the Mobil propaganda prestige.

Put in the crudest and most accurate way, as Michael Gerrard did for *Esquire* in a recent (excellent) survey of the Mobil propaganda machine, it comes down to this: "With sheer cash, Mobil has become a *Times* columnist." The nameless Mobil ad writer consumes, per appearance, more space than Reston or Wicker or Safire.

It's as though *The Times* were selling advertising space on the inside of its cranium. There is just so much skull and it can't be stretched. Similarly, *The Times* allots itself only so much space—two pages: the editorial and the Op-Ed pages—in which to express its opinions and to monitor the opinions of others. Any reduction in the control it maintains over those two pages is, practically speaking, a reduction in its self-allotted freedom of opinion.

Robert Sherrill is The Nation's *White House correspondent.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How much reduction has resulted? By my figuring, the Op-Ed page contains 126 column inches. A typical Mobil ad runs about 33 column inches. This means that in the last seven years *The Times* has sold nearly 14,000 inches of cranium space to Mobil—the equivalent of more than one hundred (100) full, complete, total Op-Ed pages. That could be called a real sellout.

If it is baffling that a newspaper of *The Times*'s integrity sells a part of its skull like a billboard, it is doubly baffling when one considers the character of some of the corporations to which it sells the space. Mobil is very much to the point. Never mind the fact that Mobil has on occasion been accused by such organizations as the United Church of Christ of supporting the oppressive regimes of Rhodesia and South Africa; we'll pass over those escapades as mere matters of conscience. But Mobil has also, from time to time, been accused of criminal restraint of trade, of conspiring to raise prices by creating an artificial energy shortage, of conspiring with other large oil companies to monopolize the refining of petroleum products over the past generation. These accusations were based on the most painstakingly cautious and conservative Government investigations. Convictions, of course, have been another thing, American justice being rather reluctant to hurt the feelings of oil companies. Still, the accusations alone, not to mention the supporting evidence, are such that if Mobil were a man, his reputation would have been so damaged as to bar him from membership in some of the best clubs. One might think *The Times* would be more sensitive in choosing its editorial-page cronies. One might also think that by now *The Times* would be embarrassed sharing precious opinion pages with a corporation whose propaganda is so noticeably short on accuracy, candor or relevancy. In general, the Mobil ads fall into these categories:

Unintentional Comedy. In 1976, for example, the Senate was seriously considering legislation to break up the major oil companies' control of oil from well to refinery to retail pump. One of Mobil's ads attempted to show that the industry wasn't monopolized by seven or eight companies. Heck no, there were hundreds of oil companies competing like mad, said Mobil, and to prove the point, it filled the ad space with the names of many of them, under the heading "Meet some of our competitors."

It was a downright hilarious list of such "competitors" as By-Rite, E-Z-Serve, Gas Hut, Hy-Flash, Kickapoo, Miss Quick, Robin, Toot 'N' Moo and Town Pump. "That's a lot of competition," wrote Mobil's ad man with a straight face. "So why is the Senate considering a bill to break up the oil industry? We'd suggest that you ask your Senator that one."

During the same period of panic over the divestiture legislation, Mobil worked up another ad quoting half a dozen allegedly objective experts on why divestiture would have all sorts of dire results. One they quoted was Prof. Neil H. Jacoby, a U.C.L.A. economist. The funny thing about using Jacoby as an "expert" forecaster is that Jacoby is the fellow who, only two years earlier, after OPEC had quadrupled its prices, came out with a book in which he predicted that OPEC "will cut the price of oil because it is in its economic interest to do so"—a happy eventuality that consumers are still awaiting.

Grotesque Distortions. For *The New York Times* of May 18, 1978, Mobil's clever ad man wrote: "When millions of Americans shivered during the harsh winter of 1977—many of them temporarily out of work because a natural gas shortage shut down their plants—some government officials pointed an accusing finger—at the petroleum industry, who else? The oil companies, it was suggested, were holding back production, waiting for prices to go up. And so the Interior Department ordered a comprehensive study.

"Well, the results of the investigation by the National Academy of Sciences have been announced by Interior Secretary Cecil D. Andrus. To the surprise of some in Washington but certainly not to ours, it 'found no evidence that there was any willfully withheld gas.' "

As an adequate summary of the quarrel, that does not even add up to a half-truth. The real sequence of events went like this: In an effort to blackmail the old Federal Power Commission into more and more price increases for natural gas, the industry began closing down wells in the early 1970s and crying "shortage." The F.P.C. staff found that 26 percent of offshore gas reserves committed to the interstate system in 1973 were not in production. Congressional investigations in 1975 found other evidence of industry blackmail of this sort. During the 1977-78 winter shortage, John F. O'Leary, the Deputy Secretary of Energy, said there was "no question" that some companies were withholding gas, awaiting higher prices.

Responding to these accusations, Andrus had ordered a study of the offshore natural gas situation almost as soon as he became Interior Secretary. The N.A.S. was asked to do the study. When it came out with its findings, they were not offered as final proof of anything. There were several reasons for this. In the first place, the study had concentrated on fields that had been long in production and were on the decline; the industry's newer, more promising fields were not investigated. Second, the fields that had been studied contained only 17 percent of the known offshore gas reserves, leaving the remaining 83 percent still in question. Secretary Andrus said the study did not settle the debate one way or another. You will, needless to say, find none of that in the Mobil Op-Ed ads. Nor will you find the Mobil ads mentioning one other significant part of the report, in which the science panel stated that the industry possessed woefully inaccurate records of its natural gas reserves.

Perhaps Mobil's greatest deception—it certainly is Mobil's most chronic deception—is its argument that the oil industry needs greater profits so that it can seek new sources of oil and gas and thereby guarantee that shortages will be avoided. Typical is the ad that appeared on February 19, 1976: "Without adequate profits, industry is hobbled in the search for new

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

energy." Mobil pretends it is almost abusing its pocketbook to find more oil. In that same 1976 ad it claims that "for every dollar we earned in 1975, we spent nearly $2 in capital and exploration outlays."

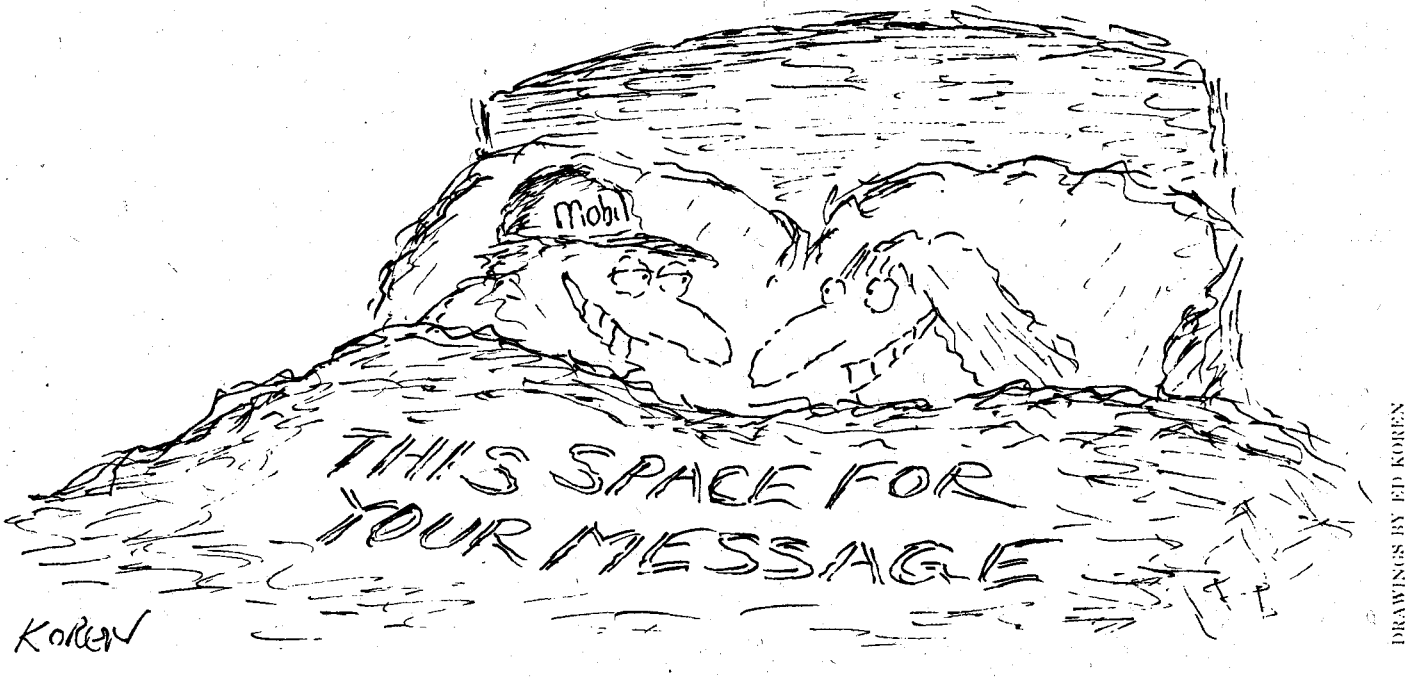
A big spender for exploration? Not quite—or at least not by comparison. *Business Week* reported that in 1975 "Mobil's exploratory drilling in the U.S. was not only less than the others' [the other top-income majors] but also less venturesome. Though the company's total exploration and production expenditures were up 9.2 percent last year, most of the money was spent on production—exploration was actually down 17 percent. On average, reports *Oil and Gas Journal*, industry exploration budgets were up 19.1 percent. Mobil did not even rank in the top 10 when it came to wildcat wells, the biggest gambles of them all."

If Mobil wasn't using its enormous profits to look for more oil and gas, what was it using them for? Simple: it was investing heavily in diversification. In its *Times* ad of February 3, 1977, it boasted that "the right diet of investments . . . has filled us out. Made us a balanced, diversified energy company." That's a roundabout way of saying that Mobil has lost faith in the future of petroleum (not so dumb) and is moving closer to the lifeboats. Mobil has started spending its billions to make sure it will have a way to escape. It has bought Montgomery Ward. It has bought control of Container Corporation, the nation's leading maker of paperboard packaging. It has bought into the chemical industry so heavily—Mobil Chemical is the nation's largest manufacturer of disposable plastic products—that it grosses more than a billion dollars from that source each year. It has plunged heavily into real estate developments both in this country and abroad. More than 20 percent of Mobil's income is from nonoil industries—bought with excessive profits squeezed from an oil-consuming public led to believe the money would be spent on "exploration."

Although *Business Week* is certainly not a harsh critic of conglomerates, even it could not let this pass. "To the oil industry's critics," it wrote, "such diversification is self-indicting. Why, they ask, should the industry and its supporters continually call for higher prices and higher profits—supposedly to support greater efforts at finding oil and gas—when the companies are clearly spending more and more money in areas that have nothing to do with energy?"

Freedom. To read the Mobil ads, you would think that the corporation is the greatest champion of freedom since Patrick Henry. In 1974 Mobil wanted to run a bland commercial on all three television networks on the theme of offshore oil drilling. CBS and ABC turned Mobil down, fearing that they would have to supply equal time to opponents of offshore drilling. Thereupon Mobil used its Op-Ed ad space, on June 17, 1974, to argue that the networks' refusal was a violation of Mobil's free speech rights. With a roll of drums it concluded: "You know the principle at stake here. You've seen it in writing, more than once: 'Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech.' You've seen it in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States."

Mobil's ad claimed that the corporation only wanted to have a free and open discussion ("Any policy that restricts the flow of information or ideas is potentially harmful") and that it was dedicated to guaranteeing that the public heard both sides. But that didn't quite jibe with *The Times* ad itself. Here Mobil was giving its interpretation of what the First Amendment meant, but saying absolutely nothing about a prominent view opposed to that interpretation—namely that of the United States Supreme Court, which ruled the previous year that neither the Constitution nor Federal law requires broadcasters to sell commercial air time for statements on matters of public controversy. Significantly, the Court's foremost defender of free speech, Justice William O. Douglas, was counted in the 7-to-2 majority. Mobil chose



DRAWINGS BY ED KOREN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to restrict the flow of that particular information.

The freedom Mobil promotes above all others is the freedom from Government regulation. Its crusade for that Holy Grail is interminable. There is, of course, some irony in this. In the first place, the little old United States Government is too weak, incompetent and cowardly to regulate a corporation like Mobil, which has $32 billion annual sales, 200,000 employees and a handful of billion-dollar subsidiaries. What if the Government wanted to inspect Mobil's books to determine if it were obeying some required price guideline? Peter Behr of *The Baltimore Sun* put that question to Jack Meyer, assistant director of the Council on Wage and Price Stability for wage and price monitoring. Meyer is one of 135 employees in that agency. Said he: "If our job was to audit, the whole 135 of us could be sent to Mobil Oil and never be seen or heard from again."

The second irony arises from the fact that Government regulation made the major oil companies what they are today, filthy rich and apparently impregnable to competition. The Connally Hot Oil Act in the 1930s set up a Government mechanism by which the supply of oil would be restricted and its price artificially supported; cheap domestic oil was, in effect, outlawed. The Federal oil-import quota system established in the 1950s critically restricted the importation of foreign oil, which was then very cheap and would have been a blessing for the consumer. In a dozen other ways Government regulations have propped up, subsidized and shilled for the oil industry; yet the commonest theme in the Mobil Op-Ed ads is that "government intervention in the free-market mechanism for allocating economic resources is purely and simply counterproductive. The free market itself does it best."

Mobil's favorite economist is Murray Weidenbaum, a Nixon-era bureaucrat who is now a professor at Washington University in St. Louis. Weidenbaum produced a tract in which he argued that Federal regulation costs $100 billion a year. Mobil loves that figure, but some economists think Weidenbaum must have followed Alice down the rabbit hole to find it. Julius W. Allen, an economic consultant to the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress, says in a recent study ("Costs and Benefits of Federal Regulation: An Overview") that Weidenbaum's estimates are based on data that are old, incomplete and "of varying degrees of reliability." They also include such paperwork costs as filing of I.R.S. and Social Security forms, which, as Allen points out with admirable lack of sarcasm, "many would not consider to be forms required for regulatory purposes." But the most offensive aspect of Weidenbaum's estimate, says Allen, is that it takes no account of the benefits of regulation.

As Mark Green, head of Congress Watch, puts it, "Suppose I said Mobil is a corporation that wastes $10 billion a year in its operations, but never mentioned that Mobil produced revenues of $15 billion a year. I'd be called an economic illiterate. But that's just what Mobil does when it talks about regulation. All they talk about is the cost side. They completely ignore the life, health, economic savings side of regulation."

Have these distortions paid off? Has the high-priced "culture" and propaganda campaign resulted in more converts, more friends for Mobil? Not among the top bananas of Washington, it hasn't. President Carter told one consultant that of all the oil companies he has had to deal with, Mobil is the least responsive and the most irresponsible. Michael Pertschuk, chairman of the Federal Trade Commission, contemplated accepting an invitation to debate Herbert Schmertz, but then decided that it would be an embarrassing comedown for a public servant to assist a corporate flack in putting on that kind of show.

No debate is needed to make plain Pertschuk's contempt for the Schmertz anti-regulatory line. Occasionally Mobil uses its Op-Ed space to run a cutesy-pie "fable" to illustrate the evils of regulation. Pertschuk has worked up his own fable, about "those learned barons, Sir Barely Mobile and Sir Herbert Besmirch," and uses it when addressing groups like the Conference Board in New York City.

Certainly Mobil has gained few friends among its corporate peers by pretending that support of a few soap operas and art shows has made it the greatest cultural patron of our era. For a corporation bringing in $32 billion a year, the $20 million in Mobil's arts and editorial budget is the exact equivalent of a gift of $20 from an individual earning $32,000 a year. Big deal. Mobil's generosity bubble was nicely punctured by Michael Gerrard, who reports that after "using known financial data to break the code to a survey by the Conference Board, I was astonished to learn that of the fifty companies that give away the most money, Mobil ranks *last* in gifts as a percent of pretax profits."

Is the Op-Ed propaganda persuasive with the public? It is highly unlikely that any reasonably intelligent person can fail to see through the patina of Mobil's enlightenment. Its ads promoting mass transit, for example, usually contain a booby-trap paragraph urging that the Highway Trust Fund be done away with and that Congress make its transportation appropriations from general revenues. That is just what the highway lobby wants, for when it gets its hands on the general tax dollar and is no longer limited to what it gets from gasoline taxes, there won't be a highway in America of less than ten lanes. Mobil's ads preaching the doctrine of unlimited and unregulated economic growth as the best way of lifting up the poor ("To give everybody a share of the pie, the pie has to keep growing so it's big enough to go around") are poorly disguised arguments against conservation and environmental-protection laws.

If liberals can't see through Mobil's smarmy philosophy, *Fortune* magazine can. It observed: "The virtue Mobil perceives in being regarded as 'different' is that it can more readily sell its case to the traditional critics of the oil industry. When it gets down to fundamentals, however, Mobil has no message sub-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stantially different from that of the rest of the oil industry, or indeed from that of large corporate enterprise in general."

In candid moments, Mobil's officials admit that the Op-Ed stuff has no measurable effectiveness. Schmertz told me that out of the millions of readers who subscribe to the newspapers where Mobil Op-Ed ads appear, the company hears from no more than about sixty in any typical week. "I'm not saying that we brought on changes in policy or public opinion," says Schmertz, "I am only saying that we contributed to the dialogue." In a gloomier mood he will admit, "You can kid yourself into believing you have done something."

One suspects that Mobil officials never envisioned the Op-Ed ads as much more than a gimmick. In the spirit of Samuel Johnson's observation—"Sir, a woman preaching is like a dog's walking on his hind legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all"—Mobil's top brass only aims to startle the world by appearing to think. A corporation thinking is not done well, but. . .

Says chairman Warner: "I think we've gained recognition that we are unique and different from the other entities in the industry." Do I interpret that remark correctly? Mobil, a dog walking on its hind legs and carrying a sign, has come to be known as the "intellectual" one, and that's what it wanted. Oil companies used to give away kitchen glasses and mugs to draw your attention. Now some of them do it with soap operas and little lectures on economics. It seems that at bottom the Mobil Op-Ed ads are nothing but publicity tricks of the most elementary sort after all, not even able to claim the integrity of genuine propaganda or straightforward commercial huckstering.

But the question remains: Why does *The New York Times*, and why do *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times* and the other newspapers, allow their editorial pages to be exploited for the sake of oil industry imagery? The publishers of those newspapers will tell you that it is for money, and they will rationalize their need for money in the most pathetic and the most pious fashion. An editor at *The Times* once asked publisher Arthur Sulzberger why they were selling the lower right-hand corner of the Op-Ed page to such questionable customers—in fact, why they were selling it at all. Sulzberger replied that the income from that corner paid for the rest of the page "where we can do what we want to do." I asked Edwin D. Gritz, who held several editorial-management positions with *The Washington Post* before becoming professor of journalism at American University, why *The Post* sold editorial page space to Mobil and his answer was much the same: "Look at it from the newspaperman's point of view, the publisher as well as the managing editor. If you're dedicated to a first-class paper you aren't going to louse up your Op-Ed page with a lot of ads. At the same time, you feel that you've got to pay for your groceries. And if you can sell discretely an ad that does not either adulterate or minimize the editorial impact of those pages, do so, because that is a very valuable and high-priced space. You have to be realistic and realize that you can become a better newspaper if you have a better economic power base from which to fight your good fight."

The Washington Post, among the 500 largest corporations in America, with an income of $436,102,000 in 1977, can't afford to fight the good fight without selling a dozen inches or so of editorial space to Mobil each week? *The New York Times* with an income of $509,520,000 in 1977, can't afford to pay for its own Op-Ed page? The Times-Mirror Company, with an income of more than $1 billion a year, must still pass the tin cup and share its editorial space with Mobil?

No, that argument won't hold. There must be another reason. I think it is this: The real reason *The New York Times* willingly opens its precious Op-Ed page to Mobil gimmickry is that big corporations, whether they peddle oil or peddle papers, feel very comfortable with one another and see matters of protocol and decorum and business ethics pretty much the same way. It has probably never occurred to *The Times*—or *The Post*, et al.,—to wonder what happens when their editorials go to bed with a Mobil fable. □

BAD WEAPONS NEVER DIE

Onward and Upward with The GBU-15

JAMES BARRON

After the blueprints have been drawn, it is difficult—indeed, usually impossible—to cancel a new weapons system that the Army, Navy or Air Force wants. It is understandable; the Defense Department's pampered bureaucracy will throw tantrums if Congress tries to withhold its playthings. But what may not be understandable to the average taxpaying mind is that it has become almost as difficult to halt a new weapon that only a handful of officials want, even after the military has acknowledged that it is plagued by serious deficiencies.

Consider the $1.2 billion Air Force missile, the GBU-15, recently approved by the Pentagon's Defense Systems Acquisition Review Committee (D.S.A.R.C.) and Secretary Harold Brown. Its inadequate testing, low reliability and poor cost effectiveness made it a prime candidate for cancellation. Instead, it has become a case study in how vested interests and bureaucratic pressures combine to push Pentagon projects inexorably toward the production line.

The GBU-15, an updated version of the Vietnam-era "smart" bombs, is designed to hit targets by use of a

James Barron works for the editorial staff of The New York Times.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

television-guided remote control system. The Pentagon maintains that, thanks to ever improving electronics, "smart" weapons are getting smarter all the time. But the General Accounting Office and the Air Force itself have suggested that the battlefield I.Q. of the GBU-15 would be low—so low that it is difficult to imagine that it could fulfill the three basic criteria for "smart" weapons, as outlined by Under Secretary of Defense William Perry, a leading advocate of such systems: "To see all high-value targets on the battlefield at any time; to make a direct hit on any target we can see, and to destroy any target we can hit."

Why, then, did the Pentagon approve production plans for the GBU-15? One answer is that it had people lobbying and rooting for it in the Pentagon's decision-making circles. Such support can be more important than a weapon's performance on the tests the military puts it through before deciding to go ahead with it. The GBU-15's tests were unimpressive at best; it needed friends in the right places at the right times, and it had them.

Pentagon planners have no enthusiasm for blue-penciling the pet project of a high Pentagon official. The GBU-15, designed, developed and tested at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, was the brainchild of George Blackshaw, who in the early 1970s was Eglin's chief engineering planner for advanced weapons. He wanted to be remembered as "the father of the GBU-15," and saw as the culmination of his career the production of the missile. By last September, when the GBU-15 came before the D.S.A.R.C. for approval, one high-ranking official in the Defense Department's own research and engineering section was George Blackshaw. Blackshaw canceled an interview I had with him to discuss his role in the project, but under the circumstances his opinion as to its readiness for production could hardly be unbiased. A few weeks after winning his case at the D.S.A.R.C., he resigned to become a vice president of the Convair Division of the General Dynamics Corporation, confident that his favorite weapon would soon take its place in America's arsenal.

While Blackshaw's support was important, the GBU-15's best friend may have been Senator Robert Byrd, the majority leader, whose staff reportedly threatened a floor fight if Senator Thomas Eagleton, a frequent critic of defense waste, tried to kill the missile. For Byrd the weapon was a pork-barrel project; many of its electronic components are to be manufactured at a Rockwell International plant in West Virginia, his home state. Eagleton had read a report by the General Accounting Office and called a special hearing of the Senate Appropriations Committee, of which he is a member. His colleagues apparently found the G.A.O.'s testimony more convincing than the Defense Department's; they refused to approve production funds, at least for now.

The ultimate irony is that the United States has already sold one batch of GBU-15s to Israel and is in the process of selling another—a deal that raises questions about the way we treat our allies. This $20 million transaction would get the production lines moving even if the Air Force does not receive any GBU-15s of its own.

Within the Pentagon itself, the GBU-15 was pushed along by the intense bureaucratic pressures that keep rational discussion to a minimum during decision making, no matter what weapon is involved. This did not contribute to a climate in which honest criticisms could be evaluated, or even offered, without fear of hurting one's career. The future assignments of the officials involved always depend on their success in shepherding weapons toward production—not in ferreting out flaws or going back to the drawing boards. So, too, do the careers of their subordinates who brief them on technical details.

This arrangement stifled discussion of substantive questions, such as whether the Pentagon's emphasis on "smart" weapons is prudent, and whether, if not, the Air Force could do without the GBU-15. Since the Pentagon brass was committed to the *concept* of the GBU-15—a "smart" weapon to be launched from F-4 and F-111 jet fighter planes—not much time was spent looking at the situation in Eastern Europe, where the GBU-15 would see action. "Smart" weapons like the GBU-15 are specifically intended to destroy bridges and ships and interrupt supply lines, but the Soviets invested in portable bridges, descendants of the Bailey bridges of World War II, to keep their supplies moving. These makeshift Soviet spans are long enough to cross a river 800 meters wide, and the Russians are willing to lug them around because they expect a certain number of bridges to be hit. Consequently, the Pentagon must devise a cheaper way to destroy bridges than with the GBU-15, which costs about $200,000 per missile, ten times the price of the Navy's Walleye, a "smart" weapon extremely successful in knocking out bridges in North Vietnam, and at least 100 times the price of conventional "dumb" bombs.

Alternatives to the Soviet bridge problem were not discussed in evaluating the GBU-15 because the Pentagon's weapons planners are under steadily higher pressure to produce weapons—any weapons. It takes longer to move a weapon from the drawing board to the battlefield than ever before—an average of five years longer than in the late 1950s, according to a recent Defense Department task force report. One Pentagon official contends that it takes ten times as long to comply with Congressional requests for committee appearances and paperwork as it did ten years ago. To speed things up, Under Secretary Perry has adopted some of the task force's time-saving suggestions, which include a reduction in the number of formal steps in the decision-making process. But this has led to increased demands on his subordinates to clear weapons speedily for production.

As a result, technical problems are not seen as stumbling blocks if the Pentagon thinks they can be corrected after a weapon gets into production. It is a doubtful assumption. The GBU-15's most serious deficiency is that its electronic guidance system can be jammed. In an interview, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense Robert Moore said that the critical component

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the inside, the data link, is susceptible to what are called electro-countermeasures (ECM). Among these are disruption of the television picture sent from the missile to the plane that launched it. Without the picture the pilot's remote control steering is useless. Most details of the jamming problem are classified, but the fact that no ECM flight testing was conducted is not. And in 1969 the Soviets published an unclassified book on jamming that described in detail the techniques that would defeat the GBU-15's data link.

In the same way, the Air Force promises to perfect the GBU-15's alternative to the jammable remote control—a semi-automatic tracking system designed to direct the weapon once the pilot has chosen a target on his TV screen and aimed it. This system is supposed to work under any conditions, but its performance is scandalous. Its one test was a failure. It has been known to lock itself onto some other point and miss the intended target entirely. And if the weapon were being jammed, the pilot would have difficulty picking out the target on the TV screen in the first place.

Another defect that would hinder the first batch of GBU-15s is susceptibility to weather. The ability of a TV-guided weapon to recognize objects against a background is lower even than the human eye. Visibility must be good, with virtually no smoke, fog or clouds; the target must have high contrast to its surroundings, and must be attacked in daylight. Since most major targets are camouflaged, since most enemy forces are adept at creating smoke screens, and since weather varies, the GBU-15's war capability varies. The missile's program coordinator in the Pentagon, Lieut. Col. Tony Asterita, maintains that the GBU-15 would work well so long as it was launched beneath the cloud ceiling. But cloud ceilings are not precisely defined, and it doesn't take much to make the GBU-15 go astray. Even light clouds throw the guidance system off. During one high-altitude maneuver the descending missile broke through one layer of clouds at about 2,000 feet, only to go into another. By the time the GBU-15 re-emerged it was too late to correct its course. It hit the ground far short of the target.

The Pentagon's pressure to produce the GBU-15 led its weapons planners to play down the significance of these problems. Various difficulties forced cancellation of more than two-thirds of its scheduled flight tests, and the remaining trials did not simulate rigorous combat conditions—that, certainly, is not the standard of performance one looks for before certifying a weapon for production. In a number of the tests the pilots were permitted to make several passes over the targets, and their maneuvers were not marred by the kinds of distraction that could confuse crews on actual missions—unfamiliar terrain, electronic interference or enemy fire. Federal Aviation Administration rules restricting low-altitude flights over populated areas near the Florida test site prohibited testing the missile's ability to function after low-level launches, even though that is how the Air Force plans to use the GBU-15 in combat.

This pattern of bureaucratic shuffling and inadequate testing does not apply to a single weapons system; it colors the decisions of weapons procurement in general, and more often than Congress and the public realize. And, with Under Secretary Perry pushing to put more weapons into production more rapidly than at any time since Vietnam, the chances for rational decision making in the procurement stages of a weapon's existence are likely to decrease.

In Vietnam, jet fighter pilots joked that bad weapons never die—they just go into production. The laughing stopped when they realized that the gag was true—when some untested, unreliable piece of brand-new gadgetry backfired and killed or maimed more of its American operators than enemy troops. The Pentagon's weapons planners are still behaving as if they had never heard that grim gag. As a result, the almost unstoppable pressures of vested interests and bureaucratic inertia will dominate. Bad weapons will not die—they will just go into production. □

WAITING FOR LEFTY

Ideological Conformity In America

NOAM CHOMSKY

To my knowledge, in the American mass media you cannot find a single socialist journalist, not a single syndicated political commentator who is a socialist. From the ideological point of view the mass media are almost 100 percent "state capitalist." In a sense, we have over here the "mirror image" of the Soviet Union, where all the people who write in *Pravda* represent the position which they call "socialism"—in fact, a certain variety of highly authoritarian state socialism. Here in the United States there is an astonishing degree of ideological uniformity for such a complex country. Not a single socialist voice in the mass media, not even a timid one; perhaps there are some marginal exceptions, but I cannot think of any, offhand. Basically, there are two reasons for this. First, there is the remarkable ideological homogeneity of the American intelligentsia in general, who rarely depart from one of the variants of state capitalistic ideology (liberal or conservative), a fact which itself calls for explanation. The second reason is that the mass media are capitalist institutions. It is no doubt the same on the board of directors of

Noam Chomsky is author of Peace in the Middle East *(Pantheon) and* Human Rights and American Foreign Policy *(Spokesman). This article is an excerpt from his new book,* Language and Responsibility, *which Pantheon Books will publish January 30, and which first appeared in France in somewhat different form. Translation from the French is by John Viertel.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

General Motors. If no socialist is to be found on it—what would he be doing there!—it's not because they haven't been able to find anyone who is qualified. In a capitalist society the mass media are capitalist institutions. The fact that these institutions reflect the ideology of dominant economic interests is hardly surprising.

It is notable that despite the extensive and well-known record of Government lies during the period of the Vietnam War, the press, with fair consistency, remained remarkably obedient, and quite willing to accept the Government's assumptions, framework of thinking, and interpretation of what was happening. Of course, on narrow technical questions—is the war succeeding? for example—the press was willing to criticize, and there were always honest correspondents in the field who described what they saw. But I am referring to the general pattern of interpretation and analysis, and to more general assumptions about what is right and proper. Furthermore, at times the press simply concealed easily documented facts—the bombing of Laos is a striking case.

But the subservience of the media is illustrated in less blatant ways as well. Take the peace treaty negotiations, revealed by Hanoi radio in October 1972, right before the November Presidential elections. When Kissinger appeared on television to say that "peace is at hand," the press dutifully presented his version of what was happening, though even a cursory analysis of his comments showed that he was rejecting the basic principles of the negotiations on every crucial point, so that further escalation of the American war—as in fact took place with the Christmas bombings—was inevitable. I do not say this only with the benefit of hindsight. I and others exerted considerable energy trying to get the national press to face the obvious facts at the time, and I also wrote an article about it before the Christmas bombings, which in particular predicted "increased terror bombing of North Vietnam."

The exact same story was replayed in January 1973, when the peace treaty was finally announced. Again Kissinger and the White House made it clear that the United States was rejecting every basic principle in the treaty it was signing, so that continued war was inevitable. The press dutifully accepted the official version, and even allowed some amazing falsehoods to stand unchallenged.

Or to mention another case, in an article written for *Ramparts*, I reviewed the retrospective interpretations of the war in Vietnam presented in the [liberal] press when the war came to an end in 1975. . . . Virtually without exception, the press accepted the basic principles of Government propaganda, without questioning them. Here we're talking about that part of the press which considered itself as opposed to the war. That's very striking. The same is often true of passionate critics of the war; presumably, to a large extent they aren't even conscious of it.

That applies particularly to those who are sometimes considered the "intellectual elite." There is, in fact, a curious book called *The American Intellectual Elite* by C. Kadushin, which presents the results of an elaborate opinion survey of a group identified as "the intellectual elite," undertaken in 1970. This book contains a great deal of information on the group's attitudes toward the war at the time when opposition to the war was at its peak. The overwhelming majority considered themselves to be opponents of the war, but in general for what they called "pragmatic" reasons: they became convinced at a given moment that the United States could not win at an acceptable cost. I imagine a study of the "German intellectual elite" in 1944 would have produced similar results. The study indicates quite dramatically the remarkable degree of conformity and submission to the dominant ideology among people who considered themselves informed critics of Government policy.

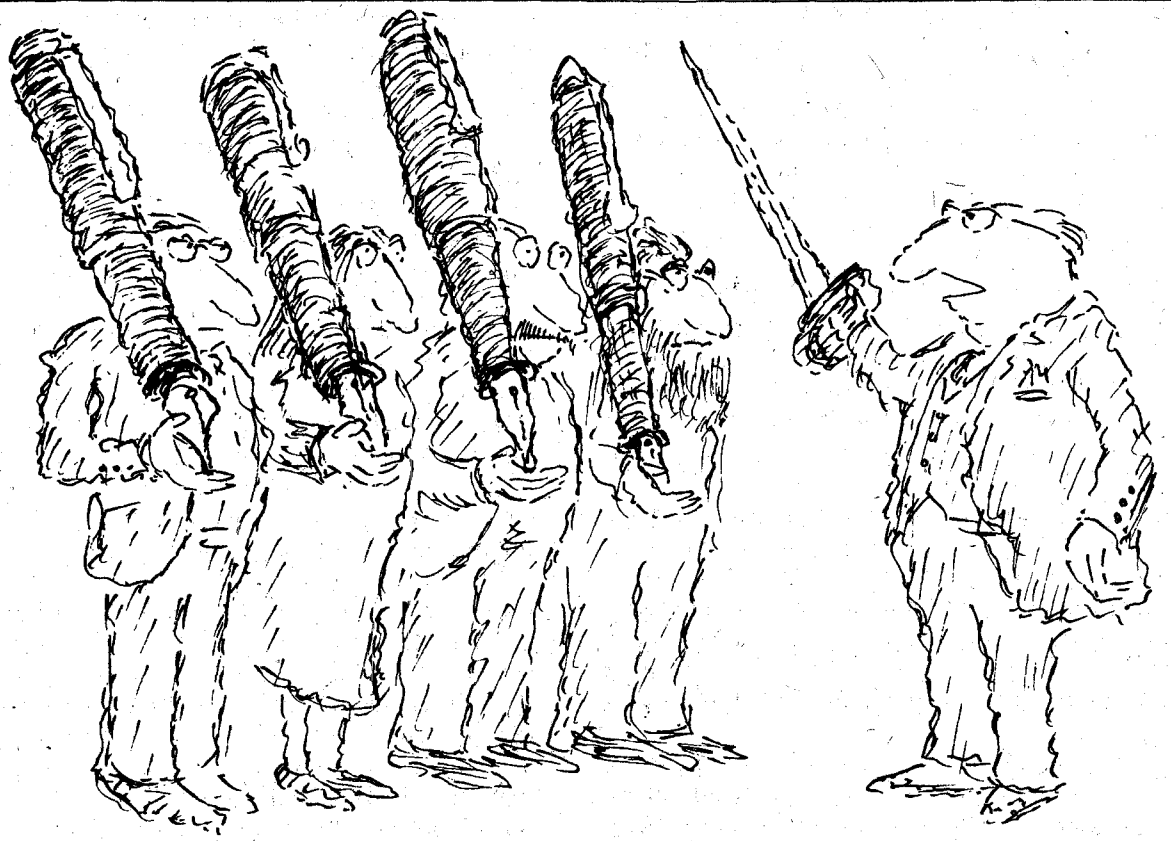
The consequence of this conformist subservience to those in power, as Hans Morgenthau correctly termed it, is that in the United States political discourse and debate has often been less diversified even than in certain Fascist countries. Franco Spain, for example, where there was lively discussion covering a broad ideological range. Though the penalties for deviance from official doctrine were incomparably more severe than here, nevertheless opinion and thinking was not constrained within such narrow limits, a fact that frequently occasioned surprise among Spanish intellectuals visiting the United States during the latter years of the Franco period. Much the same was true in Fascist Portugal, where there seem to have been significant Marxist groups in the universities, to mention just one example. The range and significance of the ideological diversity became apparent with the fall of the dictatorship, and is also reflected in the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies—a two-way street, in that case, in that the Portuguese intellectuals were influenced by the liberation movements, and conversely, I suppose.

In the United States the situation is quite different. As compared with the other capitalist democracies,

JUDGESHIP PROJECT

The Nation is publishing a series of articles by Dorothy Samuels and James Goodman of the Committee for Public Justice monitoring the selection of 152 Federal judges under the Omnibus Judgeship Act of 1978. Their reports incorporate information from a network of regional correspondents in civil rights and civil liberties groups, and from social activists and journalists across the country. Readers of *The Nation* are invited to participate by sending local newspaper clippings or personal observations on Federal judgeship candidates to the Committee for Public Justice, 22 East 40th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



the United States is considerably more rigid and doctrinaire in its political thinking and analysis. Not only among the intelligentsia, though in this sector the fact is perhaps most striking. The United States is exceptional also in that there is no significant pressure for worker participation in management, let alone real workers' control. These issues are not alive in the United States, as they are throughout Western Europe. And the absence of any significant socialist voice or discussion is again quite a striking feature of the United Sates, as compared to other societies of comparable social structure and level of economic development.

Here one saw some small changes at the end of the 1960s; but in 1965 you would have had great difficulty in finding a Marxist professor, or a socialist, in an economics department at a major university, for example. State capitalist ideology dominated the social sciences and every ideological discipline almost entirely. This conformism was called "the end of ideology." It dominated the professional fields—and still largely does—as well as the mass media and the journals of opinion. Such a degree of ideological conformity in a country which does not have a secret police, at least not much of one, and does not have concentration camps, is quite remarkable. Here the range of ideological diversity (the kind that implies lively debate on social issues) for many years has been very narrow, skewed much more to the right than in other industrial democracies. This is important.

Some changes did take place at the end of the 1960s in the universities, largely due to the student movement, which demanded and achieved some broadening of the tolerated range of thinking. The reactions have been interesting. Now that the pressure of the student movement has been reduced, there is a substantial effort to reconstruct the orthodoxy that had been slightly disturbed. And constantly, in the discussions and the literature dealing with that period—often called "the time of troubles" or something of that sort—the student left is depicted as a menace threatening freedom of research and teaching; the student movement is said to have placed the freedom of the universities in jeopardy by seeking to impose totalitarian ideological controls. That is how the state-capitalist intellectuals describe the fact that their near-total control of ideology was very briefly brought into question, as they seek to close again these slight breaches in the system of thought control, and to reverse the process through which just a little diversity arose within the ideological institutions: the totalitarian menace of Fascism of the left! And they really believe this, to such an extent have they been brainwashed and controlled by their own ideological commitments.

It is certainly true that there were some cases in the American universities when the actions of the students went beyond the limits of what is proper and legitimate. Some of the worst incidents, as we know now, were instigated by Government provocateurs, though a few, without doubt, represented excesses of the student movement itself. Those are the incidents on which many commentators focus their attention when they condemn the student movement.

The major effect of the student movement, however, was quite different, I believe. It raised a challenge to the subservience of the universities to the state and other external powers—although that challenge has not proved very effective, and this subordination has remained largely intact—and it managed

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to provoke, at times with some limited success, an opening in the ideological fields, thus bringing a slightly greater diversity of thought and study and research. In my opinion, it was this challenge to ideological control, mounted by the students (most of them liberals), chiefly in the social sciences, which induced such terror, verging at times on hysteria, in the reactions of the "intellectual elite." The analytic and retrospective studies which appear today often seem to me highly exaggerated and inexact in their account of the events that took place and their significance. Many intellectuals are seeking to reconstruct the orthodoxy and the control over thought and inquiry which they had institutionalized with such success, and which was in fact threatened—freedom is always a threat to the commissars.

It did not seem to me at the time that the student activists were really trying to "politicize" the universities. During the period when the domination of faculty ideologues was not yet at issue, the universities were highly politicized and made regular and significant contributions to external powers, especially to the Government, its programs and its policies; this continued to be true during the period of the student movement, just as it is today. It would be more exact to say that the student movement, from the beginning, tried to open up the universities and free them from outside control. To be sure, from the point of view of those who had subverted the universities and converted them to a significant extent into instruments of Government policy and official ideology this effort appeared to be an illegitimate form of "politicization." All of this seems obvious as regards university laboratories devoted to weapons production or social science programs with intimate connections to counterinsurgency, Government intelligence services and propaganda, and social control. It is less obvious, perhaps, but nevertheless true, I think, in the domain of academic scholarship.

To illustrate this, take the example of the history of the cold war, and the so-called revisionist interpretation of the period following World War II. The "revisionists," as you know, were those American commentators who opposed the official "orthodox" version. This orthodoxy, quite dominant at the time, held that the cold war was due solely to Russian and Chinese aggressiveness, and that the United States played a passive role, merely reacting to this. This position was adopted by even the most liberal commentators. Take a man like John Kenneth Galbraith, who within the liberal establishment has long been one of the most open, questioning, and skeptical minds, one of those who tried to break out of the orthodox framework on many issues. Well, in his book *The New Industrial State*, published in 1967—as late as that!—where he lays much stress on the open and critical attitude of the intelligentsia and the encouraging prospects this offers, he says that "the undoubted historical source" of the cold war was Russian and Chinese aggressiveness: "the revolutionary and national aspirations of the Soviets, and more recently of the Chinese, and the compulsiv vigor of their assertion."

The "revisionist" alternative was developed in var ious conflicting versions by James Warburg, D. F Fleming, William Appleman Williams, Gar Alpero vitz, Gabriel Kolko, David Horowitz, Diane Clemens and others. They argued that the cold war resulte from an interaction of great power designs and suspi cions. This position not only has prima facie plausibil ity but also receives strong support from th historical and documentary record. But few peopl paid much attention to "revisionist" studies, whic were often the object of scorn or a few pleasantrie among "serious" analysts.

By the end of the 1960s, however, it had become im possible to prevent serious consideration of the "revi sionist" position, in large part because of the pressures of the student movement. Students hac read these books and wanted to have them discussed What resulted is quite interesting.

In the first place, as soon as the revisionist alterna tive was seriously considered, the orthodox position simply dissolved, vanished. As soon as the debate was opened, it found itself lacking an object, virtually. The orthodox position was abandoned.

To be sure, orthodox historians rarely admitted that they had been in error. Instead, while adopting some of the revisionist views, they attributed to the revisionists a stupid position, according to which—to take a not untypical characterization—"The Soviet Government . . . was merely the hapless object of our vicious diplomacy." This is Herbert Feis's rendition of the position of Gar Alperovitz, whose actual view was that "the Cold War cannot be understood simply as an American response to a Soviet challenge, but rather as the insidious interaction of mutual suspicions, blame for which must be shared by all." Quite typically, the view attributed to the revisionists was a nonsensical one that takes no account of interaction of the superpowers. Orthodox historians took over some elements of the revisionist analysis, while attributing to them an idiotic doctrine that was fundamentally different from what had actually been proposed. . . .

Starting from this slightly revised basis, many orthodox historians have sought to reconstruct the image of American benevolence and passivity. But I do not want to go into this development here. As for the impact of the revisionist analysis, Galbraith again provides an interesting example: I have already quoted his book, which appeared in 1967. In a revised edition, in 1971, he replaced the word "the" by the word "an" in the passage quoted: "the revolutionary and national aspirations of the Soviets, and more recently of the Chinese, and the compulsive vigor of their assertion, were *an* undoubted historical source [of the cold war]" (my emphasis). This account is still misleading and biased, because he does not speak of the *other* causes; it would also be interesting to see in just what way the initiatives of China were "an undoubted source" of the cold war. But the position is at least tenable, in contrast to the orthodox position, which he gave in the previous edition four years

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

earlier—and prior to the general impact of the student movement on the universities.

Galbraith is an interesting example just because he is one of the most open, critical, and questioning minds among the liberal intelligentsia. His comments on the cold war and its origins are also interesting because they are presented as a casual side remark: he does not attempt in this context to give an original historical analysis but merely reports in passing the doctrine accepted among those liberal intellectuals who were somewhat skeptical and critical. We are not talking here about an Arthur Schlesinger or other ideologues who at times present a selection of historical facts in a manner comparable to the party historians of other faiths.

One can understand why so many liberal intellectuals were terrified at the end of the 1960s, why they describe this period as one of totalitarianism of the left: for once they were compelled to look the world of facts in the face. A serious threat, and a real danger for people whose role is ideological control. There is a recent and quite interesting study put out by the Trilateral Commission—*The Crisis of Democracy*—by Michel Crozier, Samuel Huntington, and Watanuki—in which an international group of scholars and others disccusses what it sees as contemporary threats to democracy. One of these threats is posed by "value-oriented intellectuals" who, as they correctly point out, often challenge the institutions that are responsible for "the indoctrination of the young"—an apt phrase. The student movement contributed materially to this aspect of "the crisis of democracy."

By the later 1960s discussion had gone beyond the question of Vietnam or the interpretation of contemporary history; it concerned the *institutions* themselves. Orthodox economics was very briefly challenged by students who wanted to understand a fundamental critique of the functioning of the capitalist economy; students questioned the institutions, they wanted to study Marx and political economy. □

© 1977 by Flammarion. English translation and revisions © 1979 by Noam Chomsky. Published by permission of Pantheon Books, a division of Random House Inc.

SOCIALISTS IN ACADEME

The House Marxists

ELLEN SCHRECKER

For the first time in American history, Marxism has become intellectually respectable. Not, as the case of Bertell Ollman indicates, too respectable. Ollman's nomination as head of the department of government and politics at the University of Maryland was rescinded by its president, John Toll, allegedly because of Ollman's socialistic views. (See "Ollman Plays 'Class Struggle' for Real" by Greg Mitchell, *The Nation*, Nov. 18, 1978.) Still, an avowed Marxist is not, as he or she would certainly have been only ten or fifteen years ago, ostracized by the academy. Not only do Marxists teach at schools ranging from community colleges to the Ivy League but their work is gaining increasing recognition as an important influence in American intellectual life. Even so, the Red tide that some conservatives claim is sweeping over the academy is still only a trickle.

Ellen Schrecker, who teaches writing at Harvard University, is working on a book about McCarthyism in the academic community.

It is a trickle that first started to flow in the late 1960s and 1970s. Until then, American Marxist scholarship, as a significant body of work, for all intents and purposes simply did not exist. American universities have always been hostile to socialism. Even during the presumably radical 1930s, left-wing academics had trouble finding—and even more trouble keeping—jobs. With the cold war, the pressure intensified. Marxists, crudely identified as Communists and "fellow travelers," were officially banned from the academy. Standard wisdom portrayed them as conspirators or, more commonly, automatons who, by surrendering their "intellectual integrity" to the party, had disqualified themselves as members of the academic profession.

Even after the paranoia subsided, the assumption that Marxists were, by definition, incapable of independent thought provided a useful rationale for keeping them and their work at a distance. As one historian, now in his 40s, puts it, "What we were told Marxism was, made it seem something only a fool would do." And, in fact, most of the Marxist scholarship that was then being produced—largely under the auspices of the American Communist Party—was far too naive and unreflective to inspire emulation. There were more sophisticated Marxists at work throughout the 1960s, but they were not taken seriously by the academic community as a whole.

The New Left changed all that. Discouraged by their failure to build a viable left-wing movement, the student activists of the late 1960s went back to their books (which most of them had never really left) to find out why they had failed. They began to read Marx; but, since Marxism was unrecognized by the academy, they had to do it on their own. "In our free time," reminisces one economist, "we learned Marxism." For such people, the transition from radical politics to academic Marxism was a natural one. Marxism "is connected to the same things I'm connected to," explains one former activist. "It enables you to integrate more of your own experience."

Just as the student radicals of the 1960s were maturing into the academic Marxists of the 1970s, the academy was beginning to relax its embargo on Marxism. Student pressures initially forced colleges and universities to hire radical teachers and offer explicitly Marxist courses. But, as the body of radical scholarship grows, it is becoming clear that many schools are recruiting Marxists as they recruit other members of the faculty—to fill a slot. Some schools

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have even advertised specifically for Marxists. Of course, not every Marxist hired is a concession to student demands or a bow to fashion; some are simply the best candidates who apply. The growth of academic Marxism is still more of a boomlet than a boom; radicals constitute a tiny minority of the nation's college teachers.

Ironically, the threat of declining enrollments has boosted the employability of Marxist scholars. As the supply of potential graduate students decreases, academic departments, especially at second-rank universities, which cannot offer their students the advantages of prestige, have to develop what one sociologist calls a "market differentiation strategy." For such schools, going the Marxist route is one way to attract students who might otherwise go elsewhere.

When the administration at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst decided to revitalize the economics department about four years ago, it hired five avowed radicals—Samuel Bowles, Herbert Gintis, Richard Edwards, Stephen Resnick and Richard Wolff—and let them put together what is probably the most comprehensive Marxist-oriented graduate program in the country. Enrollments doubled and the department's status rose, not only at the University of Massachusetts, where it now is, according to the university's own criteria of Graduate Record Examination scores and faculty pubications, one of the top two departments, but within the larger academy community as well. "The graduate students we get," says Bowles, probably the most well-known member of the department, "are astoundingly good. Places like Harvard and M.I.T. take people we turn down."

Similar efforts to build Marxist or quasi-Marxist programs are underway at places like the University of Rochester's history department or the sociology department at the State University of New York at Binghamton. Even where there are no specifically Marxist programs, there are enough individual Marxists and sympathetic liberals around to enable a student to write a Marxist-oriented dissertation at almost any of the major graduate schools. At Berkeley, for example, a whole generation of Marxist sociologists trained itself under the aegis of a friendly, though by no means socialist, department.

Like all academics, Marxist ones tend to organize themselves by discipline. Almost every field has some kind of a left-wing caucus within its professional organization. Originally established to get the parent body to take a stand against the Vietnam War, most of these caucuses have turned into independent scholarly groups which sponsor panels at conferences and publish such specialized journals as *The Insurgent Sociologist*, *Radical History Review* and *Dialectical Anthropology*.

In economics, however, the radicals essentially withdrew from the American Economic Association and established an alternative organization, the Union for Radical Political Economics, which has its own journal and holds its own annual conferences. Economics may well be a special case, for Marxism poses a direct challenge to the ruling orthodoxy. In other fields, radicals seem more assimilated into the mainstream. The American Sociological Association has not one, but two Marxist or quasi-Marxist sections; and the *American Journal of Sociology* is thinking of putting out a special issue devoted to the neo-Marxist contributions to sociology. And, in history—at least in American history—Marxism is the mainstream. The University of Rochester's Eugene Genovese is the current president of the Organization of American Historians and Wisconsin's William Appleman Williams, a *marxisante* if not a Marxist, the president-elect. Ever since 1975, when Genovese's *Roll, Jordan, Roll* got the Bancroft prize, books by Marxists or by scholars who have been influenced by Marxism have been winning this most coveted award in American history.

Not so long ago, Marxists could barely get their stuff published. Historian James Weinstein spent five years making the rounds of commercial and university presses before he let the socialist Monthly Review Press publish his first book, *The Decline of American Socialism*, in 1967. Beacon Press, the quasi-commercial publishing arm of the Unitarian Church, put out his second, *The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State 1900-1918*; Random House, his third, *Ambiguous Legacy: The Left in American Politics*. Nowadays, university presses and the more intellectually ambitious commercial ones even publish entire series of erudite Marxist books, like Oxford University Press's *Marxist Introductions* or Illinois's *The Working Class in American History*. They sell. *The Capitalist System*, a textbook written by three radical economists in 1972, has already sold out its entire first edition of 80,000.

Similarly, mainstream journals now accept Marxist articles. A young scholar who recently submitted an explicitly Marxist piece to the *American History Review* was surprised to find it favorably received. His reader was Genovese. For many of these scholars, this new-found respectability creates a dilemma. "You are very torn about where to publish," confides a young historian. "Do you publish where you can reach your audience or where it looks better on your *cita*?" After all, though an article in the *Review of Radical Political Economics* does count for tenure at many schools, an article in the *American Economic Review* counts for more. As a result of the mainstream's hospitality to left-wing scholarship, editors of the radical journals acknowledge that they are having trouble getting material.

Intellectually, Marxist scholars look to Europe for they reject much of what previously passed for Marxism in this country. The influence of Europe is enormous. "American Marxist culture is backward," explains Harvard historian Mary Nolan. "It has no tradition." Within the Marxian intelligentsia of the European Communist Parties and the British labor movement, American academics can find a tradition to identify with. Going to Europe and actually establishing contact with a thriving Marxist intellectual

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

community gives many American scholars the exhilarating feeling of what one young historian calls, "being part of a worldwide movement." They find similar stimulation from the increasing numbers of European Marxists who, as visiting professors, now come to America on a regular basis. Ultimately, of course, it is the ideas, not merely the example, of European Marxists that have most influenced the American ones. The English social historians, Eric Hobsbawm and E.P. Thompson, were crucial. They opened the eyes of an entire generation to the possibility that critical Marxist scholarship could be as creative and sophisticated as anything the mainstream produced.

Thompson influenced everybody—economists, sociologists and literary critics, as well as historians. Marxist intellectuals are nothing if not interdisciplinary. A political scientist can write about social unrest in New York City before the Civil War, a historian can study unemployment, and an economist can teach a course about work in the Middle Ages. Marxists, whatever their ostensible disciplines, often study the same phenomena, what one scholar calls "the social relations of communities and classes." They look, for example, at work and the condition of the working classes or at imperialism and the problems of the third world and the developing nations. In almost every case, they are consciously trying to expand the boundaries of their particular disciplines.

Marxist academics—because they are Marxists—resemble one another intellectually. They see themselves as critical, rather than objective, scholars but the bitter polemics that were once so characteristic of left-wing intellectuals seem to have disappeared. Instead, today's Marxists regard themselves as being engaged in the communal project of building a coherent intellectual movement; and most of them are modest enough to welcome all the help they can get. Instances of collaboration abound. When a group of radical historians wanted to set up an independent organization, they went directly to the Union for Radical Political Economics for advice. Nowhere is the spirit of hatchet-burying so obvious as in the editorial policy of *Marxist Perspectives*, Eugene Genovese's attempt to establish a "forum for the shaping of American Marxist culture." It is to be, he claims, "an open journal." And he has been consciously trying to solicit articles from every sector of the American and European left. *Marxist Perspectives* has its critics, people who fear that it is becoming "too eclectic, too watered-down and soft." But even these critics speak of the magazine without rancor; they may not agree with its approach, but they want it to succeed.

For all their optimism, few Marxist intellectuals, when pressed, would deny that real problems exist. Most of them are intensely political people, activists or former activists, who realize the incongruity of their commitment to social change and their present encapsulation in the academic world. They would join a political movement if a meaningful one existed; but, as one disheartened radical points out, "there's nothing, even on the back burner." As a result, they are in danger of becoming ghettoized, of becoming mere academics. "You teach Marx, someone else teaches Rousseau," explains a young political scientist as he describes the temptation to treat Marxism "as your specialty." For, without a viable political left to identify with, he and his colleagues are finding it increas-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ingly difficult to withstand the depoliticizing pressures of academic life.

They lack opportunities for political involvement. On a few campuses Marxists work at organizing faculty unions. Other radicals find that they can contribute simply by doing their regular research. This is the case with many economists, especially the ones who publish *Dollars and Sense*, U.R.P.E.'s attempt to make the findings of radical economics accessible to the general public. Similarly, left-wing anthropologists work with Native Americans threatened by coal mining in the West; and Latin American specialists study Chile.

Other scholars, whose research seems less immediately relevant, often view their teaching as a political act. Bertell Ollman, now an associate professor at New York University, offers a course on Marxism out of the conviction that anybody who really understands it will automatically become a Marxist. For some reason, people in literature, especially people who teach in community colleges, are similarly optimistic about the political efficacy of their work. "We are *engagé*," explains one professor. "We are involved in our teaching and in our scholarship in changing people's consciousness, in preparing them for political action." But many, perhaps most, Marxist academics, confronted with classes full of career-oriented, politically quiescent adolescents, doubt they will make many converts.

They worry instead about their own futures, about the isolation and insecurity that most of them face. There are only a handful of schools with more than two or three Marxists on the faculty. Accordingly, most socialist scholars feel isolated, conspicuous. "I know I can't make waves," explains one assistant professor at a small liberal arts college, and she wasn't just talking about tenure. Exposing oneself as a radical, as a troublemaker, someone who would question the university's South African investments at a faculty meeting, invites ostracism as well as dismissal.

Even for tenured people, the situation can be depressing. "I can't talk with my colleagues," complains a full professor at an Ivy League university. "My interests have just changed." Many of those colleagues are, of course, hostile to Marxism. At best, like the former chairman of the Harvard economics department, they consider it "corny" and simply refuse to take it seriously. Occasionally, they even attack it as "political propaganda," as a group of eminent sociologists did when economist James O'Connor gave a colloquium at Harvard several years ago. One historian still sees letters from scholarly journals explicitly turning down perfectly unobjectionable work on the ground that "This article is full of Marxist dogma."

Unemployment is, of course, the ultimate threat. These are hard times in academe. Yet many Marxists are surprisingly sanguine about the prospects for placement. Genovese claims that his graduate students get jobs. And it may very well be that in some fields socialists do have a slight edge, at least initially. As one young scholar noted, in trying to account for the fact that all his radical colleagues from graduat school had better jobs than his nonradical one though the Marxists may not be brighter, "their polit ical commitment makes their work better and mor interesting."

But a good first job does not automatically lead to permanent one, certainly not in today's market. Here in lies the crunch. At the moment, the bulk of the aca demic left consists of junior people who will b coming up for tenure within the next few years There is no certainty that they will get it. What th future development of academic Marxism will lool like when many of its practitioners are out on th streets is a very serious question.

An equally pressing question is whether, if these people do lose their jobs, it will have been because o their politics. As the case of Bertell Ollman shows McCarthyism still exists. Yet Ollman's situation is atypical; the attack on him was openly political. Most of today's discrimination, if it exists, is couched in academic terms. "Inadequate research" was the excuse given for firing a brilliant, but politically aggressive, economist at a large state university. Personality plays an important, though rarely acknowledged, role. Quiet, well-behaved Marxist scholars can sometimes get promoted; outspoken activists have more trouble. Paul Nyden, a sociologist who works with the dissident rank and file of the United Mine Workers, claimed that the University of Pittsburgh let him go for political reasons. He sued and collected out of court. Samuel Bowles didn't sue; but Harvard's refusal to give him tenure so seriously split the economics department that Nobel Prize winner Wassily Leontief left the university in disgust.

In response to the Bowles case, the American Economic Association set up a special committee to handle complaints of discrimination against Marxists. So far it has dealt with about half a dozen. According to the committee's former chairman, Nobel laureate Kenneth Arrow, "in no case that we have completed were we able to establish political discrimination." This does not mean, Arrow points out, that such discrimination does not exist, merely that his committee could find no evidence of it.

For many academics, especially those who lived through the 1950s, the possibility that something like McCarthyism might recur inspires caution, if not fear. Even younger people tread softly when they can. Most of the untenured Marxists who were interviewed for this article requested anonymity. People at state-supported schools are particularly anxious. One highly respected professor not only forbade me to discuss him and his colleagues but even refused to let me mention the name of his university. Nor is this an isolated incident. When a young Marxist and a group of her colleagues decided to offer "Marxism" as part of a series of "Topics in Social History," she was warned by an older colleague, an ordinarily calm and rational gentleman, that it would be unwise for their department to list a course on Marxism in the catalogue. She ignored his advice, but adds, "I don't think it's as safe as I think it is." □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Marx: the Dancer and The Dance

MARSHALL BERMAN

MARX'S FATE, The Shape of a Life. *By Jerrold Seigel. Princeton University Press. 451 pp. $16.50.*

An apparition floated by me on Upper Broadway not long ago: a girl in a red T-shirt that displayed, on and around her breasts, a group of Karl Marxes, about four or five of them, in a semicircle, arms linked, smiling broadly, kicking their legs high in a rousing dance. This delightful vision turned out to be real: after I'd backtracked a block and caught up with the girl, she told me that it was the emblem of U.R.P.E., the Union for Radical Political Economics. That shirt can tell us something about what has happened to Marx in the America of the 1970s. First of all, everybody seems to have accepted the existence of many Marxes: no party, movement or country has a monopoly on his thought. Second, these many Marxes seem to be coexisting rather well—a nice surprise, for weren't they only yesterday at one another's throats, each insisting that the others weren't really Karl Marx at all? Finally, they are coming together in an activity that's expressive, playful, even a little vulgar—an activity that would have been considered most un-Marxian not long ago. Today's Marxes have kept in touch with their youthful romantic visions of politics as dancing.

The cultural leap that made this dance possible was first assayed on a mass scale about twenty years ago, when Marx's unpublished essays and notes of 1844 were translated into all major European languages—they are generally known in English as the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*—and published by Moscow in cheap editions for a large public. The central idea of these youthful essays was "alienation." The trouble with capitalism, it said here, was that it alienated people from one another, from nature, and—here is where Marx was most original—from themselves: from their senses, their emotions, their imaginative powers, from "the free development of their physical and spiritual energies." Marx focused on work as a primary source of meaning, dignity and self-development for modern man; the bourgeois organization of labor was a crime against these human needs. But Marx also wrote lyrically about sexual love, and about its perversion by the power of money; about history as the unfolding education of the five senses, and the ways in which that education had gone awry; about the material roots of the widespread modern sense of spiritual rootlessness. These essays, coming out in the midst of the greatest capitalist boom in history (1959 in the United States), provided a searing indictment of capitalism even at its most triumphant. At the same time, Marx's critique cut just as deeply into Stalinist communism—there was even a model of a "crude, mindless communism" that Marx feared as a regression from capitalism—from the perspective of communism's own ultimate values.

The young Marx was condemned, of course, by the ideological commissars of the various C.P.s, and by their right-wing equivalents in the United States. But Marxism had gained, or regained, a sensual warmth and a spiritual depth that all the Sidney Hooks and all the Althussers could not take away. The spirit of the young Marx animated the radical initiatives of the 1960s, from Berkeley to Prague; and even when political energy was crushed, as in the East, or when it dissipated itself, as in the West, this spirit survived. Even after a barren decade, today's Marxes can dance.

If Marx's early writings are no longer so central to his reputation as they were, say, a decade ago, this is mostly because their lessons have been learned, their themes and energies assimilated into our sense of his work as a whole. But there is one vital area in which our perspective on Marx has not deepened at all: the study of his life. Many studies have appeared over the years that have examined his life with increased political acuteness and philosophical sophistication. Almost without exception, however, these biographies have been emotionally flat, spiritually arid, psychologically remote. If we compare the current state of Marx studies with Edmund Wilson's magnificent *To the Finland Station* (1940), we will find that we have a far deeper understanding of Marx's ideas, and yet, if anything, rather less of a feeling for the emotions at the heart of those ideas.

In this context, Jerrold Seigel's new book, *Marx's Fate: The Shape of a Life*, should be welcomed very warmly. Seigel brings us, in many crucial ways, closer to Marx than we have ever been. He captures the desperate intensity and volatility of Marx's inner life, the exhausting anxieties that kept his mind inexhaustibly alive. I should say at once that the book has its problems: Seigel never makes up his mind whether he is writing a psychoanalytical "Young Man Marx" or a full-scale intellectual and political biography; hence he lurches uneasily between genres, changes gears at high speeds, frequently loses touch with his overall aims, gets lost in endless exposition and paraphrase, and writes a book that is twice too long. In other ways, though, the book is too

Marshall Berman, author of The Politics of Authenticity, *teaches political theory at City College, City University of New York. He is working on a study of modernist culture and modernization.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

short: it omits crucial aspects of Marx's life, even at the moments that concern Seigel most; it circles obsessively around a very limited number of themes, and wholly omits other motifs that are at least as urgent and fruitful; it gives little sense of the expansiveness of Marx's mind. Nevertheless, *Marx's Fate* puts us in touch with much of Marx's deepest thought and feeling, and reveals the history of his ideas as a history of the most radical self-contradiction, as one of the great inner dramas of modern times.

Seigel thrashes around for the first couple of chapters, and it isn't clear for a while what the book's focus is going to be. He is clearly frustrated in writing about Marx's childhood: neither he nor anyone else has found much solid material to build on here. Seigel takes off at the point where Marx begins to take off, in his late teens, when he is getting ready to leave home for the first time, to attend university and choose a vocation. Now, suddenly, Seigel and his readers find themselves flooded with material. Marx at this point was just beginning to overwhelm people with his volcanic intellectual power, and frightening himself and his loved ones as to what was going to become of that power.

Like many highly gifted adolescents whose brilliance at once amazes and frightens those around them (today we should have to include their therapists), Marx overflowed with endless fantasies and myths, models and conceptualizations about himself: Prometheus, of course; but also Faust, and his demonic pact; the philosopher Democritus, who supposedly put out his eyes so he could see ideas in their full clarity; Karl Moor, Schiller's robber-hero, who tears down half the world but yearns only for his father's blessing; Hoelderlin's Hyperion, racked with inner darkness amid Greek sunlight; Rameau's nephew, with what Hegel called "the disintegrated consciousness"; specters of suicide (on which Seigel has unearthed an early essay) and madness. Part of the problem for Seigel, as for any therapist working with gifted adolescents today, is to figure out which of the subject's marvelous imaginative constructs are essentially screens, and which are for real; the more brilliant the subject, the more ingenious the disguises are apt to be, and the harder and more elusive will be the analyst's work.

What Seigel considers real for Marx is, above all, his relationship with Hegel. This relationship is familiar enough as an organizing principle in Marx studies. But Seigel isn't really interested in Marx's criticism or transformation of Hegelian ideas. Instead, he wants to look at the history of social thought in much the same way that Harold Bloom, in *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973) and *A Map of Misreading* (1975), has approached the history of modern poetry: as an arena in which primal emotions, for the most part Oedipal ones, can be expressed, fought out, and sometimes worked through. Thus Seigel's Marx confronts Hegel more as a demon than a doctrine, a totemic figure that must be fought and overcome; this Marx strives incessantly to expel the demonic force, both from his own mind and from Western culture, only to find himself again and again in need of its sustenance, or else to have it creep up on him unawares, like Freud's return of the repressed.

Marx's relation to Hegel is so complex and agonized, Seigel argues, because it is infused with all the energy and agony of Marx's relationship with his father. The Marxes, like many an intellectual family then and now, seem to have mythicized their emotions, and fought out their deepest emotional conflicts in intellectual and ideological terms; then as now, the intellectual language may both articulate and conceal what is really going on. In any case, both Marx and his father Heinrich twisted Hegel into a mythical figure that had less to do with Hegel's works than with the Marx family's desires and fears. For both father and son, in the 1830s, Hegel seems to have symbolized a life of narcissistic ecstasy: the thinker's temptation to build up a self-subsistent world of inner life and activity, cut off from the material world, from people and human feeling, but radiant with joy and a sense of magical power that no reality could give.

In fact, this temptation and danger, inherent in the activity of contemplation, are as old as the history of ideas. Plato's version—the visionary philosopher who dreads returning to the cave of normal human life—is already a relatively late one. Meditative and mystical circles, like the Jewish cabalists, have always sought to guard against the allure of unembodiment. The Romantics were especially tempted and endangered by it, as readers of Coleridge and Hoelderlin know well. Seigel does nothing to put this strange longing in historical or psychological perspective—its full history has never even been attempted—but he does a great deal to show how crucial it was for Marx. For the adolescent Marx, Seigel argues (and illustrates abundantly), there was something intensely seductive about this vision of life; his reason and conscience condemned it as sterile and empty—if not, indeed, insane—but his desire to submerge himself in pure thought was too deep for mere reason or conscience or sanity to erase.

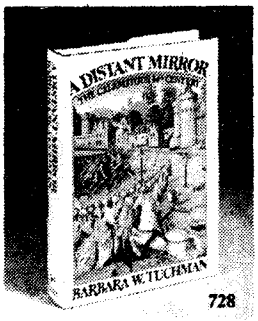
This temptation, and the guilt it provoked, form the context for a fascinating and crucial exchange of letters between Marx and his father in 1837, when he was 19 years old and studying in Berlin. Marx's father, who has always been warm and affectionate toward his son, suddenly turns on him with a torrent of hysterical fears. "Sometimes," Heinrich Marx writes, "my heart revels in thoughts of you and your future. And yet, I cannot rid myself of ideas that raise a presentiment of fear, when like lightning the thought closes in: does your heart correspond to your head. . .?" He fears that his son's heart does not "beat in a purely human way," and that, instead, Karl is possessed by a "demonic spirit" that "estranges your heart from finer feelings." Should his son take the dark road that looms ahead of him, he would see "the finest aim of my life in ruins."

What was eating this normally loving and supportive father? What possessed this Voltairian rationalist to start raving about demon possession? What did Marx do to deserve this? Nothing, so far as we can tell; and this may have been the trouble: he wasn't doing anything to choose a profession, to settle down, to work for family (he had just proclaimed his love for Jenny von Westphalen, the girl who would be his wife) and humanity; all he wanted to do at this point was to read, to speculate, to develop his mind as an end in itself. An innocent pursuit, most of us would think, for a youth of 19. In the terms of the family mythology, however, innocence equals temptation—indeed, in a sense, equals guilt: the young thinker enjoying his mind's powers is in fact being tempted by inner demons—the specter of Hegel first among them—that would spirit him forever away. Heinrich must have seen his curses as desperate attempts to drive them out.

This must have been unbearably painful for Marx, not only because he loved his father and felt endlessly obligated to him but, also, as we will see, because he wholly shared the mythology from which his father's fears sprang. We see this in a long letter of a few months later, in which, alternately proud and abject, lyrical, explosive and semi-delirious, Marx substantiates his father's worst fears: he has gone over to Hegel. This famous letter (November

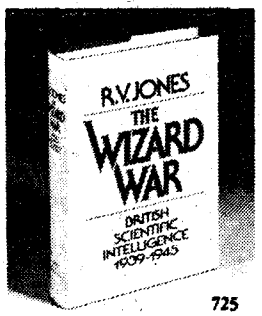
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

23 engrossing books of history and world affairs...



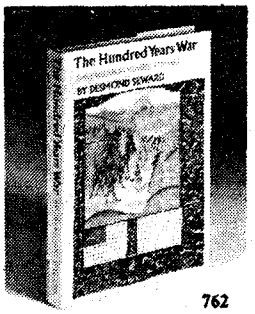
728

A Distant Mirror: The Calamitous 14th Century. *By Barbara Tuchman.* A vivid reflection of life in the 14th century. $15.95/**$9.95**



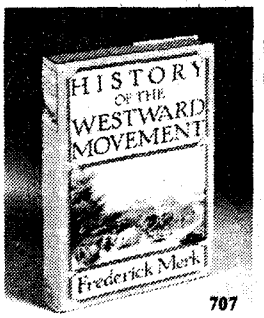
725

The Wizard War: British Scientific Intelligence, 1939-1945. *By R. V. Jones.* The battle waged by British scientists and their German counterparts. $12.95/**$8.95**



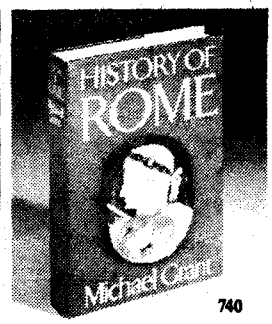
762

The Hundred Years War: The English in France, 1337-1453. *By Desmond Seward.* $11.95/**$8.95**



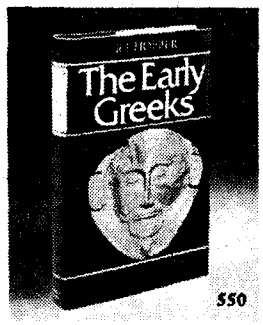
707

History of the Westward Movement. *By Frederick Merk.* The great migration from Europe to California. $20.00/**$11.95**



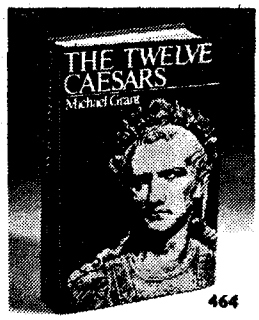
740

History of Rome. *By Michael Grant.* A narrative history with description of Roman life in each significant period. $17.50/**$11.50**



550

The Early Greeks. *By R. J. Hopper.* The emergence of Greek civilization in all its archaelogical and cultural splendor. $25.00/**$13.00**



464

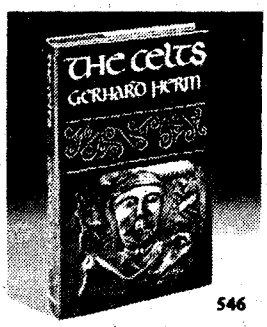
The Twelve Caesars. *By Michael Grant.* From Julius in 49 B.C. through Domitian in 96 A.D. $12.50 **$8.75**

Take Any 3 All for 99¢

values up to $70.00

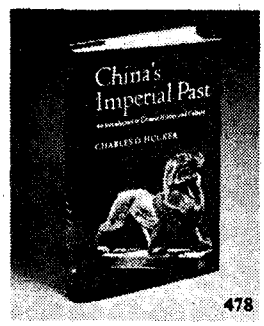
with trial membership

(First price is publisher's list. **Boldface** shows member's price.)



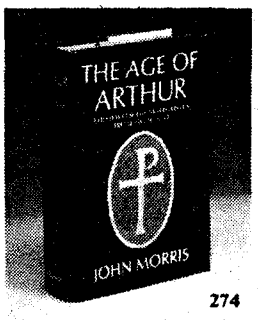
546

The Celts. *By Gerhard Herm.* A 2000-year epic study of a fierce people and their rise to an empire rivaling Greece and Rome. $12.50 **$8.50**



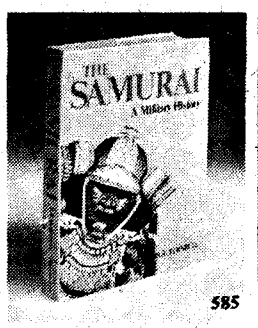
478

China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture. *By Charles O. Hucker.* China's achievements from prehistory to 1850. $17.50/**$11.95**



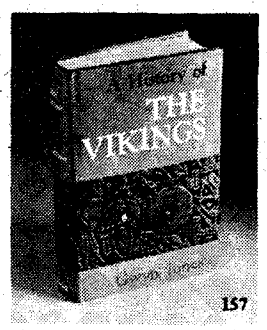
274

The Age of Arthur. *By John Morris.* British history from 350-650 A.D. $17.50/**$11.95**



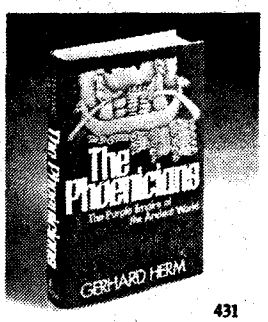
585

The Samurai: A Military History. *By S. R. Turnbull.* An exhilarating account of Japan's fierce warriors and their code of honor. $17.95 **$11.95**



157

A History of the Vikings. *By Gwyn Jones.* From prehistory to 1066 A.D. $15.00 **$9.95**



431

The Phoenicians. *By Gerhard Herm.* A portrait of the people who traveled and traded with the world for 1000 years. $8.95/**$7.50**

P79C

4 Good Reasons To Try The History Book Club

Big cash savings. Last year our members saved 33% on their Club purchases. Your total savings as a trial member, including this introductory offer, can be more than 50%.

Liberal bonus plan. You can qualify for added savings through bonus books, selected from our full list of 150-200 fine works.

Exceptional quality. In its 32 years, the Club has distributed over 1,000 books, including 67 award winners. Our books are the equal of publishers' editions, not economy reprints.

Membership Benefits. A membership account will be opened for you, to which your purchases will be charged at the low member's prices. You need pay only after you have received your books. A postage-and-packing fee is added to each shipment. Every four weeks (13 times a year) you will receive our *Review* containing descriptions of new and recent selections. If you want the Editors' Choice, do nothing; it will be sent automatically. If you want another book, or no book at all, return the card by the date specified. If you should receive an unwanted book because you had less than ten days to decide, you may return it and pay nothing. We guarantee postage.

More fine books to choose from:

(First price is publisher's list. **Boldface** is member's price.)

754. **Medieval England: A Social History and Archeaology from the Conquest to 1600 A.D.** *By Colin Platt.* $25.00 $12.95

737. **Cosmos, Earth, and Man: A Short History of the Universe.** *By Preston Cloud.* $14.95 $9.90

414. **Russia Under the Old Regime.** *By Richard Pipes.* 1000 years of Rusian growth. $17.50 $10.95

667. **The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity.** *By J. B. Russell.* $15.00/$9.95

520. **Plagues and Peoples.** *By William H. McNeill.* Impact of diseases on civilization from prehistory to the present. $10.00/$7.75

674. **Hitler's Spies: German Military Intelligence in World War II.** *By David Kahn.* $16.95/$10.95

665. **The Hittites: And Their Contemporaries in Asia Minor.** *By J. G. Macqueen.* $18.00/$11.00

606. **The Mycenaean World.** *By John Chadwick.* A vivid reconstruction of pre-classical Greece. $17.95/$11.95

708. **Man's Rise to Civilization: The Cultural Ascent of the Indians of North America.** *By Peter Farb.* $15.00/$9.95

739. **Montaillou: The Promised Land of Error.** *By Emmanuel LeRoy Ladurie.* A study of the life in the village of Montaillou during the 14th century. $20.00/$13.00

The History Book Club

Stamford, Conn. 06904

Please enroll me as a trial member and send me the four books whose numbers I have entered below. Bill those on the left at 99¢ for all three and the fourth at the low member's price, plus postage-and-packing.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I may return the books within three weeks at your expense and owe nothing. Or, I will buy four more selections within a year *(not counting my choices above)*, and then I may resign at any time. All Club purchases are at low member's prices, and a postage-and-packing fee is added to all shipments.

Print name_____

Address_____

City_____

State_____ Zip_____

In Canada; mail to The History Book Club, 16 Overlea Blvd., Toronto M4H 1A6 Ontario. NA-038

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

10, 1837) reads, in its central narrative, like a conventional account of religious conversion: dejection, melancholy, physical and mental wasting away; then, at the nadir of negativity, a sudden infusion of light, a renewal of life and energy, a rededication of all the self's powers; finally, a plea for understanding and sympathy from the loved one, an affirmation of faith that everything can be made clear and the two of them can live in harmony once again. This drama, enacted by so many of us in our own adolescent years (or later), is deeply moving when we watch Marx go through it. And yet, interwoven with this archetypal experience of human growth, we find strands of stranger feeling, permeated with the Marx family's peculiar mystique.

Karl's conversion took place, he says, in the midst of a lovely but anguished moonlit night. He had begun a dialogue on nature and God, and given himself up to the inner movements of his mind, when suddenly an unconscious current carried him away: "This darling child of mine [his dialogue?], nurtured in moonlight, bears me like a false-hearted siren into the clutches of the enemy." There are so many dimensions of meaning here: the language of sexual temptation and infidelity, seduction and betrayal, with Marx as a not wholly unwilling victim; the erotically charged radiance of ideas, intensely alluring but, like the sirens, lethal; the equivalence of woman (siren) and child, and the strong ambivalence toward them both, and toward their almost supernatural pull (the moon) on Marx's self; finally, Marx's way of placing himself in the same relationship to his father—beautiful but weird and dangerous child—that his uncontrollable thoughts bear to himself. In this remarkable sentence, Marx sees himself simultaneously as seducer and seduced, guilty and innocent, male and female, parent and child. He then pleads for his father's understanding—at a point where it is not at all clear that he understands himself—and guiltily affirms his undying love. He begs for a chance to come home—had his father forbidden him to come, or is he merely asking for carfare?—so that "I can clasp you in my arms and tell you all I feel"; then, maybe, "the clouds that hang over our family will lift." Finally, foreshadowing the most famous image of Marx's mature years, "I shall not be able to lay aside the spectre that haunts me until I am in your dear presence." Six months later, Heinrich Marx was dead.

Seigel's treatment of this crucial episode shows both the strength and the weakness of *Marx's Fate*. Its strength lies in its feeling for the emotional intensity, conflict and anguish that underlie Marx's ideas; its weakness, in its inability to keep these searing emotions in focus. Seigel surmises, plausibly enough, that Marx must have been deeply haunted by guilt when his father died. But he tells us nothing about how Heinrich actually died; about where Karl was when he died; about what transpired between them in the interval between the letter and the death—did Karl ever make it home, did he get his chance to clasp his father to his breast and share his deepest feelings?; about how Karl responded concretely to Heinrich's death—what he said, what he did—for surely he must have expressed something to somebody. Given the psychological intensity of the book up to now, this is a great disappointment: Seigel's Marx becomes vague and recedes from our vision at exactly the moment when he should be coming really close. Seigel has gotten caught up in the language and mythology of Marx's self-constructions, just where he should be deconstructing the myths and showing us the man himself.

Although Seigel remains excessively entangled in Marx's many webs, he is perceptive and often brilliant in penetrating their intricacies and depths. He argues that, emotionally (unconsciously), Marx equated the solid material world with his father, and with his own sense of filial obligation; his desire to immerse himself in a world of pure thought expressed a kind of Oedipal will-to-power, the power to create a world of ideal freedom beyond his father's reach. Thus, even though Marx would criticize German Idealism as a conservative ideology, Idealism remained his own mode and symbol of personal rebellion. Materialism, though he portrayed it as politically radical, was for him emotionally conservative, a way back to the father he had denied. The dialectical fusion of materialism and idealism, which Marx first imagined in his "Theses on Feuerbach" (1845, when he was 27), was also a symbolic emotional reconciliation between father and son, between his adolescent desire for total freedom and his father's insistence on the ties that bound him to this world. This psychological synthesis enabled Marx to come into his own—in the language of Erik Erikson, it enabled him to resolve the problem of his identity. His genius enabled him to sublimate his personal dialectic to a world perspective—a perspective that sheds brilliant light on the mixtures of autonomy and constraint that define our lives, and that dramatizes our need for a world in which we can fulfill ourselves with and through one another—and so, to become the world-historical man we know.

One of the primary powers in Marx's synthesis seems to have been sexual love. Biographers have noted, as even police agents noted, that Karl and Jenny Marx had, despite much turbulence and suffering, a passionate and joyous marriage, sustained for forty years, ending only in death. Indeed Marx is one of the very few great thinkers in all history to have enjoyed a happy marriage and family life. Seigel shows how sexual love played a vital part in the formation of his identity, helping to liberate Marx from psychic isolation and center him in the real world. Marx thought and wrote a great deal about sexual love in the mid-1840s, just after his marriage, when he was trying to fulfill his father's ideal of life with people. Note the basis on which, in 1845, he would reject German Idealism: he remarks derisively that this philosophy and "the study of actuality" have "the same relation to each other as masturbation and sexual love." This is the image of a man self-confident in his newly fulfilled adult sexuality. He passes the same cruel judgment on a rejected mode of thought as on a discarded mode of sexual life: both are masturbatory, outgrowths of solitary, barren self-absorption; he has outgrown them both, he feels, and grown into a healthier and more mature mode of thought—"the study of actuality"—which, like sexual love, reaches out and embraces other people.

And yet, even here, specters haunt him. We can faintly see the shadow in another remark about love from this period: it is love, Marx says, that "first teaches man to believe in the objective world outside himself." A lovely image, and yet, imagine how deep a man's inner isolation must be for him to need such a proof! It should be easy to understand why, under the pressures of this psychic undertow, Marx should need an inner ballast to hold him to this world.

Sexual love could fulfill a vital part of this need. But materialist thought, which Marx also embraced in the mid-1840s, seems to have served the same purpose. Hence the sense of intense exhilaration and relief that animates Marx's first materialist manifestoes: "One has to leap out of philosophy, and devote oneself like an ordinary man to the study of actuality"; "as history

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

oves forward, [intellectuals] . . . have ıly to take note of what is happening ɛfore their eyes, and to become its outhpiece"; and, of course, "the phisophers have only interpreted the orld, in various ways; the point, howver, is to change it." It is as if a crushg burden had been lifted from Marx's ıul, so that he might live in the real orld "like an ordinary man" at last. ut there is also something unsaid and sturbing beneath the surface. Marx's roject sounds remarkably like Kierkeaard's "leap of faith," with which it is xactly contemporaneous. There is an ura of religious renunciation here: Iarx seems to be hoping that he will ever have to think another thought; ıe forward movement of history, he ıinks, will do his thinking for him, and e will need only to speak for it.

Seigel argues that Marx's leap, rootd in his inner need for ballast, made a ertain kind of sense in the Eastern Euope of the late 1840s. This was a time hen everyone, regardless of philosohy or politics, believed that material orces were moving toward a final poarization and confrontation that, whatver the outcome, would decisively esolve everyone's fate. Not only the *Communist Manifesto*, but equally the 848 writings of Tocqueville, Herzen, Baudelaire, and a hundred lesser figıres—indeed, everyone who lived hrough these years—are full of the imgery of veils and masks being stripped way, and of social forces revealing hemselves in their naked truth. What nade the defeats of 1848-51 so dreadful or Marx and his generation was not nerely the repression and mass murler—this was to be expected from the Party of Order—but the mysterious, even bizarre character of the new social ormations. The mystery seemed deepest in France, where reality had once seemed so clear: the Second Empire, a strong centralist state that repressed bourgeois liberalism as much as proleıarian socialism; that stood above all classes and exploited them all.

The defeats of 1848-51 shattered Marx's life, not only politically and economically but psychologically as well. In exile, unconnected, unemployed (except for intermittent journalism, often brilliant and original, but often underpaid or not paid at all), hounded by the police, Marx was more than ever thrown back on himself and the dangerous dynamisms of his inner life. And yet, Seigel argues, in the depths of his solitude, Marx was saved by a return of the repressed. He rediscovered the power of pure thought: his conceptual and theoretical powers, which he had dreamed of putting to sleep, now came marvelously awake, and brought him a new and fruitful life. He renewed his inner links with his Hegel and his strengths as a philosophical thinker. He accepted the mysterious nature of post-1848 capitalism, and the mystery of his (and so many other people's) isolation in its midst, and he concentrated all his inner resources on penetrating beneath its surfaces and plumbing its depths. In searching out the hidden structures and dynamics of capitalism, Marx came into touch with buried sources of energy and dynamism within himself. Thus a traumatic isolation prepared the ground for a series of new syntheses and triumphs, from *The 18th Brumaire*

Sen. James Abourezk,
Bella Abzug, Julian Bond, Norman Cousins,
Clay Felker, Milos Forman, Joseph Heller,
Cong. Elizabeth Holtzman, Vernon Jordan,
Jerzy Kosinski, J. Anthony Lukas,
Sen. George McGovern, Joseph Papp,
Sen. William Proxmire, Gail Sheehy,
I.F. Stone, Tom Wicker **read it.**

Cesar Chavez, Ramsey Clark, Fred Cook,
Harold Clurman, E.L. Doctorow,
Jules Feiffer, Frances FitzGerald,
John Kenneth Galbraith, Ralph Nader,
Marcel Ophuls, Octavio Paz,
Nora Sayre, Studs Terkel,
Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. **write it.**

Victor Navasky **edits it.**

We've changed the face of The Nation. The new Nation is something to see.

Why is today's Nation, from editorial to the arts, wiser and wittier than anything in the field? The answer is in the people who read it, write it, and edit it.

Join them. Say "yes" to our enticing offer in the coupon.

The Nation.

333 SIXTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10014

YES! Send me six months (24 issues) of The Nation at the low introductory rate of $8.95. I understand I may cancel at any time and receive a prompt refund for all undelivered copies.

☐ I enclose $8.95 For saving you billing costs I will receive four extra issues free.

☐ Enclosed is $21 for one full year (47 issues).

* Add $3.00 (or equivalent U.S. funds) per year for Canada and Mexico, $5.00 (or equivalent U.S. funds) for all other foreign subscriptions.

Name _____
(please print)
Address _____ 2005
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Louis Bonaparte to *Das Kapital*.

The Hegelian conceptual structure of *Capital* has been known since the 1920s, when it was unveiled by Lukacs and Korsch. Seigel is original in showing that structure's psychological foundations—and in showing, too, its terrible human costs. First of all, just as Heinrich Marx had feared in the 1830s, the part of Karl's nature that pulled him toward Hegelian pure thought also pulled him away from the material world, from human feelings, from the people who loved and needed him most. Thus, while Jenny and the children starved and suffered dreadfully for fifteen years (circumstances eased up only in the late 1860s), Marx largely withdrew from responsibility for their material and human needs, to wrestle in solitude with ultimate ideal truths. ("When you, poor little devil, have to go through the bitter reality"—he writes this to Jenny as she is fighting off landlords, grocers, bailiffs—"it is no less than just that I live through the torture at least ideally." Thus he complacently cordons off his wife to deal with reality on her own while he floats freely, though perhaps not happily, in the sphere of the ideal.)

Second, his flight from material reality led him cruelly and systematically to wreck his own health: as much damage as he did to his loved ones, he probably did even more to himself. (Maybe, unconsciously, he was punishing himself for punishing them.) Third, his immersion in thought often alienated him from the human realities that his thought was meant to grasp; hence, Seigel argues, especially in the later parts of *Capital*, Marx's thought turned increasingly in on itself, and became hopelessly uncommunicative; the deeper he delved, the closer he came to drowning in his own material. Fourth, especially in his last years, Marx drove himself and everyone around him crazy by his refusal to finish *Capital*. "I had to use every moment in which I was capable of working in order to complete my book, to which I have sacrificed my health, my happiness and my family." Marx wrote this in 1867, just as Volume One was about to appear; but he would keep making these sacrifices for another sixteen years, indeed till the moment he died. Engels, Jenny, their daughters, all Marx's friends, urged him to let the work go, accept its imperfections and incompleteness, let it take its chances and do its work in the world; but he held on for dear life, plunging ever deeper into its dialectics, refusing to give it up until, somehow, its ideas would resolve and realize themselves.

Seigel is inexhaustible in generating ideas about Marx's life and his work and the connections between them. Sometimes his conjectures seem arbitrary and forced, and occasionally—as in dealing with Marx's mother, the most elusive figure in the story—gratuitously bitchy. But the overall level of his intuitions and speculations is impressively high, and *Marx's Fate* is full of fruitful suggestions for future working through. Sometimes, however, even where Seigel is doing well, we wish he would stop. He tends to do what he shows Marx doing: drown in his material. It is a measure of the book's peculiar power that this reviewer, too, feels himself pulled under with them.

This is a pity, because *Marx's Fate* would have twice its impact if it were half its size. Instead of trying to cover everything and prove everything, Seigel should have presented his vision as clearly and vividly as possible, and let it run on its own power. It would have gone far, because as an intellectual vision it is very impressive. It reveals the isolation and anguish that were interfused with Marx's most radical creativity. It explains why Marx so often tried to represent this thought—and, indeed, thought in general—as a passive mouthpiece for material forces; but it also makes clear what a desperate and pathetic piece of wishful thinking this was. It shows Marx as one of the great tormented giants of the 19th century—alongside Beethoven, Goya, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Ibsen, Nietzsche, Van Gogh—who drive us crazy, as they drove themselves, but whose agony generated so much of the spiritual capital on which we all still live.

Seigel is brilliant, then, in illuminating Marx's shadows. In at least one place, however, he sees more shadows than are really there. For Seigel, the great tragedy of Marx's life was his inability to finish *Capital*. He likens Marx to the hero of a Balzac story that Marx loved, "The Unknown Masterpiece." Balzac's hero, recognized universally as one of the great painters of his age, buries himself in his studio for thirty years to create a work that will not only be surpassingly beautiful—that, for him, would be nothing new—but will revolutionize all art. Finally, his peers win admission to his studio—and are horrified by what they see: the canvas has been so endlessly reworked, and overlaid with so many layers of paint, and so many different ideas, that it is utterly unintelligible. In one corner of the canvas a human foot is visible, a vestige of the original inspiration, radiantly beautiful, but enveloped an overwhelmed by chaos. This, Seig seems to say, is Marx's own story. (E doesn't take us to the end of the story, which the old painter, finding his visi meaningless to others, burns all h works and perishes in the flames.)

But there is a whole other layer meaning in "The Unknown Maste piece," ignored by Seigel, but pr foundly relevant to Marx. Balzac description of the old man's great wor is in fact a perfect description of a 20t century abstract painting. The fact tha Balzac could not have known this onl gives it a deeper resonance. The point that, where one age sees only chaos an incoherence, a later or more moder age may discover meaning and beaut Thus the very open-endedness Marx's later work can make contac with our time in ways that more "fi ished" 19th-century writing canno *Capital* reaches beyond the well-mad works of Marx's century into the di continuous modernism of our own.*

It is worth noting that, in Volum One of *Capital*, Marx plays with th idea of an ending, makes us think he bringing us to an ending, only to shif and surprise us at the last moment. Th would-be ending comes in Chapter 3 "The Historical Tendency of Capitalis Accumulation." Here we find, in it most compressed and dramatic form, scenario for the developing inner con tradictions of capitalism, leading t proletarian revolution and bourgeoi collapse. Increasingly, "the monopoly o capital becomes a fetter" on the moder forces of production that capital ha brought into being. "The centralizatio of production and the socialization o labor reach a point at which they be come incompatible with their capitalis husk. The husk is burst asunder. Th knell of capitalist property sounds. Th expropriators are expropriated." A fin dramatic climax, and a perfect mo ment, we might think, at which to enc the book. And yet, although the end is mere ten pages off, Marx suddenly

*Even within the terms of the 19th century, we can ask—as men of the 19th century themselves asked—whether many conventional endings didn't hurt more than they helped. Think of that Radio City Music Hall chorus at the end of *Faust*, dissipating all its human intensity; of Raskolnikov sitting on a Siberian river bank, and suddenly seeing the light—but don't ask, dear reader, what that light was; of the mountains of junk/shit/money that dominate the world of *Our Mutual Friend* getting simply carted away—but don't ask where they went; of Tolstoy at the end of *War and Peace* doing his best to obliterate not only our experience but his own achievement. If we think of works and endings like these—and it would be easy to think of many more—the absence of an ending might not be such a bad idea after all.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

akes us off into a whole new metamorhosis of capital: Chapter 34, "The lodern Theory of Colonization," or how apitalism transplants itself into virgin oil, and envelops the whole undeveloped world. As we fade out, we see capial, having torn the American continent o pieces, girding itself to do the same to ustralia. The dramatic impact is stunning: it brings us down from the apocayptic heights of Chapter 33, back into he real world in which, while we were ut fantasizing about its end, capital vas busy accumulating more capital.

We should be able to see, now, how bsurd it would have been for Marx to inish his great work: how can *Capital* nd while capital lives on? To stop imply and abruptly, rather than crete an ending, preserves far more of the ruth that *Capital* has to tell; circling, piraling, plunging one way and another, turning in upon himself, seeking ndlessly for new axes to turn on, Marx kept his thought and his work as openended, and hence as resilient and longived, as the capitalist system itself. This is why we are still only beginning to explore the depths of Marx's thought; why he speaks to us in a voice fresher than ever today; why he will be dancing up Broadway when we are all dead.

Seigel does not see all this, but he sees so much that his work deserves our warmest admiration. *Marx's Fate* helps us understand how modern social thought, as much as modern poetry and art, is at once an expression of personal loneliness and an attempt to overcome that loneliness. Once we can feel the depths of Marx's solitude and his need for connections with people and life, we will appreciate his achievement in creating real bonds between man and man. In the depths of Marx's spirit, we can nourish our own. □

Therapy's Triumph

JACKSON LEARS

THE CULTURE OF NARCISSISM: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations. *By Christopher Lasch. W.W. Norton & Company. 268 pp. $11.95.*

The most powerful critics of capitalism have often looked backward rather than forward. From William Morris to Lewis Mumford, they have arraigned capitalist "progress" for promoting untrammeled individualism and eroding loyalties to family, craft, community or faith. Recognizing that any serious critique of capitalism requires a stable set of alternative values, many thoughtful political radicals have been cultural conservatives. During the past two centuries, they have constituted an enduring tradition of dissent.

In the United States during recent years, one of the most vigorous critics working within this tradition has been Christopher Lasch. Cranky, tendentious, his essays have nevertheless been a source of intellectual excitement and an antidote to fashionable pieties across the political spectrum. Resistant to progressive cant, he has remained an unabashed moralist amid liberal "pragmatists" and radical devotees of instinctual liberation. Above all, Lasch has revealed uncommon insight into the cultural pathologies of life under modern capitalism.

The Culture of Narcissism takes a number of Lasch's recent essays, adds some new material, and reworks the whole into a continuous argument. In broad outline, the book is a powerful indictment of the nonmorality promoted by consumer capitalism, drawing on a wide variety of evidence; it is boldly conceived and gracefully, sometimes eloquently expressed. But in detail, the book is uneven; it suffers from a superficiality in historical explanation and a tendency to substitute assertion for argument. In part, the difficulties stem from Lasch's unwillingness fully to acknowledge his cultural conservatism. He clings to some of the honorable values in Victorian culture—moral discipline, parental authority, the work ethic—without making his allegiance explicit. As a result, his critique loses polemical focus; sometimes it degenerates into a repetitive tirade. In short, while *The Culture of Narcissism* is an exciting and suggestive book, it could have been a vastly more persuasive one.

Like many other observers, Lasch has been struck by the quests for authenticity which have spread across the American cultural landscape—transforming literature into confession, devaluing politics and public discourse, reinforcing therapeutic self-absorption. But unlike others on the left such as Richard Sennett, Lasch does not see the therapeutic sensibility as a retreat into "primitivism." On the contrary, Lasch argues, the current obsession with private life masks an inability to sustain it in the warlike tangle of capitalist social relations. For Lasch, therapeutic remedies are worse than the disease: they promote manipulative personal relations and weaken commitments outside the self. Most important, the therapeutic outlook obscures the social source of personal suffering: the disintegration of public life under capitalism.

In Lasch's view, the increasing prominence of narcissism reflects a fundamental historical transformation. In the heyday of entrepreneurial capitalism, psychiatric patients commonly complained of hand-washing compulsions and hysterical paralyses. Under the aegis of bureaucratic capitalism, patients more often suffer from emptiness, normlessness, and severe oscillations of self-esteem. For Lasch, the change involves more than a handful of neurotics; the shift in psychic maladies is an exaggerated expression of a shift in character structure among the general population.

To illuminate that wider transformation, Lasch seeks to connect narcissistic traits with contemporary cultural tendencies. He creates a composite portrait of the American narcissist. No longer confident in the reality of the external world, Lasch's narcissist finds it difficult to suspend disbelief; he helps to swell the audience for the *avant-garde* art which undermines its own capacity to sustain illusion. Seeking health rather than virtue, he has lost sight of individual ethical responsibility. Fearing the aggressive impulses in his own unconscious mind, he cultivates pseudo-self awareness as a path to peace of mind and displays a bland surface of sociability as a counter in corporate "gamesmanship." He is inert to the play spirit of ritualized rivalry in sport, incapable of long-term commitments to work or family, terrified of old age and encroaching death.

With this bleak picture of capitalism's corrosion of values, Lasch updates *The Communist Manifesto*. Under capitalism, Marx wrote, "All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned. . . ." To Lasch, "all freedoms under capitalism come to the same thing, the same universal obligation to enjoy and be enjoyed." It is the cry of the outraged moralist, and it derives its power not from analytical rigor but from the emotional intensity behind it. Yet *The Culture of Narcissism* is more than a *cri de coeur*; it is a complex argument, with some serious shortcomings.

Jackson Lears is an instructor in American studies at Yale University, and is completing a study of American dissents from modernity.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The most obvious difficulty involves a lack of evidence. Lasch makes so many illuminating connections (such as those between politics and sports, between success ideology and *avant-garde* theater) that I am sometimes tempted to overlook his book's sketchiness. As he points out, most social science has degenerated to the measurement of trivia; it is to Lasch's honor that he has chosen to risk speculative generalization. But Lasch does not acknowledge the speculative quality of his work and much of his argument is flawed by his argumentative, assertive style. Some chapters seem pasted together; entire sections are at best tenuously related to the "culture of narcissism" framework. And worst of all, the historical explanations often race breathlessly from point to point, collapsing complex developments into a paragraph or sentence; the subsection called "The Battle of the Sexes: Its Social History" is two pages long. In general, Lasch fails to provide the kind of dense historical matrix that would have immeasurably strengthened his argument.

The problem of substituting ideology for social practice is even more apparent in Lasch's discussion of the professional assault on parental authority. Here again, he underscores but oversimplifies some crucial cultural changes. He rightly attacks the "helping professions" for masking class interests in the neutral jargon of social science. But he does not seem to realize that, no matter how imperialistic professionals' intentions may have been, they have not always been able to accomplish their aims. Nor have they come uninvited onto parents' domain; often parents—especially among the middle and upper classes—have collaborated in promoting therapeutic ideals. In general, the culture of narcissism has more complex origins than Lasch suggests.

Determined to find social sources for the spread of narcissistic traits, Lasch moves away from the subtle psychological speculations of the early chapters toward a description of struggle between scheming experts and bewildered, helpless parents. In the earlier chapters, he treats the therapeutic orientation as a mode of conduct embraced by individuals in flight from inner emptiness; later he treats it as a mode of social control used by psychiatrists, social workers and market research analysts. Both emphases are important to a historical understanding of the culture of narcissism, but the first is more illuminating because it raises the question of motives: Why have so many 20th-century Americans chosen the therapeutic orientation promoted by advertisers and experts?

Lasch touches on this question when he discusses the feelings of unreality behind the narcissistic quest for authentic experience. Content to describe the sense of unreality as a result of proliferating images in magazines and television, Lasch neglects older and more complex historical origins: the relentless dynamic of the capitalist market, which has undermined all stable social relations (including those within the family) and all settled convictions; the increasing comfort and convenience of many Americans' lives, which have become insulated from physical labor as well as primary processes of birth and death; the softening of mainstream Christianity into a platitudinous creed which has evaded the tragic contradictions at the heart of human life.

The last of these developments, the transformation of American Christianity, is crucial to understanding the culture of narcissism—and Lasch virtually ignores it. From the liberal humanism which preaches "self-realization" to the resurgent evangelicalism which offers conversion as a cure for anxiety, American Christianity has surrendered to therapeutic ideals. Lasch could have extended his range from the likes of Jerry Rubin to some of the "born-again." For many ordinary Americans as well as countercultural radicals, religion often has become little more than a quest for self-fulfillment. As supernatural frameworks of meaning have weakened, religious emphases have shifted from salvation to peace of mind. The culture of narcissism has many social roots, but it also stems from the personal anxieties engendered by secularization.

Lasch's insensitivity to secularization may derive from his determination to preserve some hope for radical reconstruction of society. If a cultural crisis has social origins then it may yield to social solutions. He suggests that a "thoroughgoing transformation of our social arrangements remains a possibility" and that a socialist revolution might well abolish the "new paternalism" which degrades both work and domestic life. But if the nonmorality of consumer capitalism is imbedded at the deep and nearly inaccessible level of the unconscious, prospects for revolution are bleak. More important, if secularization has played a major role in creating the culture of narcissism, how does one undo its effects in attempting to recreate frameworks of meaning outside the self?

One of the most difficult problems facing critics of capitalism is the need to create alternative unities of belief in a culture which has dissolved nearly all higher loyalties—to particularist ideals of family or community, to universalist ideals of fraternity or humanity, to God. While Lasch has insufficiently clarified his commitment to those older values, he has acutely (though unevenly) analyzed the process of their dissolution. His insights undermine his hopes for reconstruction. He himself seems unconvinced that any measures can reverse the corrosive impact of capitalism on morality. But if capitalism's hour is far from late, there are still honorable alternatives to accommodation—not only the attempt to alleviate suffering or promote political resistance but also the effort to keep values alive in a valueless society. This last is the task of moralists in exile, who can find few stronger exemplars than Christopher Lasch. □

Sound Over Sense

SHERRY TURKLE

THE HISTORY OF SEXUALITY: Volume I: An Introduction. *By Michel Foucault. Pantheon Books, 168 pp. $8.95.*

Michel Foucault can make people angry. His most recent work, *The History of Sexuality, Volume I*, has made historian Paul Robinson, writing in *The New Republic*, angry enough to try to persuade others not to read the book. I for one am glad I did not heed Robinson's injunction. Even with its shortcomings, Foucault's *History of Sexuality* is a special treat: It contains a provocative thesis which challenges standard interpretations of modern sexual history as a history of repression; it has powerful strategies for understanding the politics of individual, family and state through an analysis of their language; it has poetry.

Robinson, like many readers of Foucault and other contemporary French social theorists, would only admit the claim to poetry; a routine way of dismissing the contribution of contemporary French intellectuals is to say they

Sherry Turkle is assistant professor of sociology at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and author of Psychoanalytic Politics: Freud's French Revolution *(Basic Books).*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ave nothing but. Robinson characterizes Foucault and those who surround im (psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan and terary critics Jacques Derrida and ulia Kristeva) as irresponsible frauds ho hide their lack of substance by re-ring on a surfeit of style, that is, on the ower of "sound over sense." "Foucault, anifestly, is one of those authors who rite with their ears not with their eads," complains Robinson, as he onders the contemporary French cene: "One wonders what could have rought on a breakdown of this magni-ude in the land of Descartes. It is as if Jature were revenging herself on the rench for the overweening rational-sm of their intellectual heritage."

Is there a breakdown in the land of Descartes? I think not. In recent years, rench intellectual life has produced n impressive group of theorists, mong them Lacan, Derrida and Fou-ault, who are associated with the tructuralist tradition of Claude Levi-Strauss and Roland Barthes, and who night best be called "constructivist" in heir emphasis on man as constituted y language and society. Foucault's *History of Sexuality* is another fine ex-mple of their upsetting ability to sub-ert our customary ways of thinking bout the world.

These French writers pursue tena-iously the investigation of language nd its unfolding in discourse. Their tructuralist tradition views man as ound by inherent rules and laws, par-icularly those embedded in the micro-tructure of language. Every issue ouched by Foucault in *The History of Sexuality* is given a special dimension y his focus on discourse.

When Foucault looks into the history f sexuality since the 17th century, he sees an "incitement to discourse" where others have simply seen a "repression of sex." Where others have seen the Victorian period as one of long sexual silence, Foucault reminds us of the cacophony of voices *talking about* sex. Those Victorians concerned with child-raising and education may have been anxious and worried about sex, but their preoccupation with it produced a prodigious literature; discourse was encouraged even in the confessional which demanded minute examination not only of the sexual act but of the thought and feeling that came before.

For Foucault, discourse does more than comment on or reflect: it "constructs" sexuality. This belief is consistent with the work of other writers in the French structuralist tradition for whom language has become the cornerstone for thinking about man. For example, whereas all schools of psychoanalysis share the belief that our language encodes traces of the unconscious, for the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, discourse actually *constitutes* the unconscious: "the unconscious is structured as a language."

The uncompromising emphasis on language comes at a price: Foucault, like Lacan, makes his point about the primacy of language in a tone which inhibits a more balanced discussion of the convergence of the linguistic and behavioral systems. What we say may reveal who we are, but surely what we do must be taken into account as well. But rigorous constructivism also carries new rewards. In Foucault's case, it has important implications for the politics of sex. The repressive hypothesis presents sex as a victim of repressive society. But for Foucault, sex is not a victim but a product of the power structure. There is no such thing as "sex" in general; there is only sex as constituted in each social order. And so, any "science of sex" which sees sex as an objective entity to be studied is in trouble; as a discourse cut off from what ought to be its subject matter, it itself becomes a carrier of a power structure.

Much of Foucault's text explores the detail of the relation between sex and power. We take the repressive hypothesis as an example of sexual discourse and ask several questions: How does it serve power? And why is everyone so eager to go along with it? In particular, what is its appeal to those people who oppose power? Foucault's answers to this last question are clear. First, the repressive hypothesis assimilates the history of sexuality into a general critique of capitalism.

Second, "If sex is repressed, that is, condemned to prohibition, nonexistence, and silence, then the mere fact that one is speaking about it has the appearance of deliberate transgression." So, if we believe the repressive hypothesis, sex becomes the true opiate of the people, not because they are bought by its pleasures but because they have the comforting illusion of revolt in their public discourse about it.

The assertion of sexual repression brings a third benefit to the critic of capitalism. The repressive hypothesis fuels fantasies of utopian societies. If sex was repressed by power, then it will be liberated after the revolution. Embedded in the repressive hypothesis is the idea that sex is internal, *belongs* to us, while the alien social power acts by restricting, deforming, censoring, and denying it.

But what such a theory of external repression hides from us is that social power constructs the individual *from within*. People will more readily accept the domination of power on the condition that it does not cause them to challenge their sense of free will. Foucault is making two points here. First, that we can live with the existence of power only by letting it blind us to the nature of its hold over us. Power commits so vast a crime against our notion of the individual that we are not even prepared to acknowledge its possibility. Second, as long as we maintain a wrong theory about the nature of the crime, our struggles against the criminal will be misdirected.

And so, Foucault's book is as much about power as about sexuality. His assertion that society and power constitute sexuality derives much of its force from another powerful and controversial theme in contemporary French writing, the view that society and power constitute the individual, or, as it is sometimes put, that "man is not his own center." According to this way of looking at things, it makes no sense to speak of social influences on the individual. Society does not "influence" an autonomous individual—society dwells within him, "decenters" him.

A reference point for French constructivist thought is the continuity between self and society. As Foucault likes to put it, man and society, like sexuality and power, are not exterior to each other. Of course, this raises special problems for a theory of social change. If you believe in an autonomous individual who can be influenced by society but is essentially exterior to it, then you can imagine his liberation through struggle against the social order. For these French theorists, envisaging the process of change is more complex: how can we think of the liberation of the individual if he is constituted and inhabited by society? Of course, this pessimistic prognosis for the liberation of the socially con-

AUTHORS WANTED BY NEW YORK PUBLISHER

Leading book publisher seeks manuscripts of all types: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, scholarly and juvenile works, etc. New authors welcomed. For complete information, send for free booklet N-5 Vantage Press, 516 W. 34 St., New York 10001

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

structed individual leaves open important questions, notably about the liberation, not of man, but of *men* as they constitute groups, social classes. France's May-June 1968 revolt marked an upsurge of romantic, utopian radicalism. In this context, Foucault's analysis has clear political relevance. But its relevance as a critique of the classical Marxist tradition (whose fundamental category is the class, not the person) is more problematic.

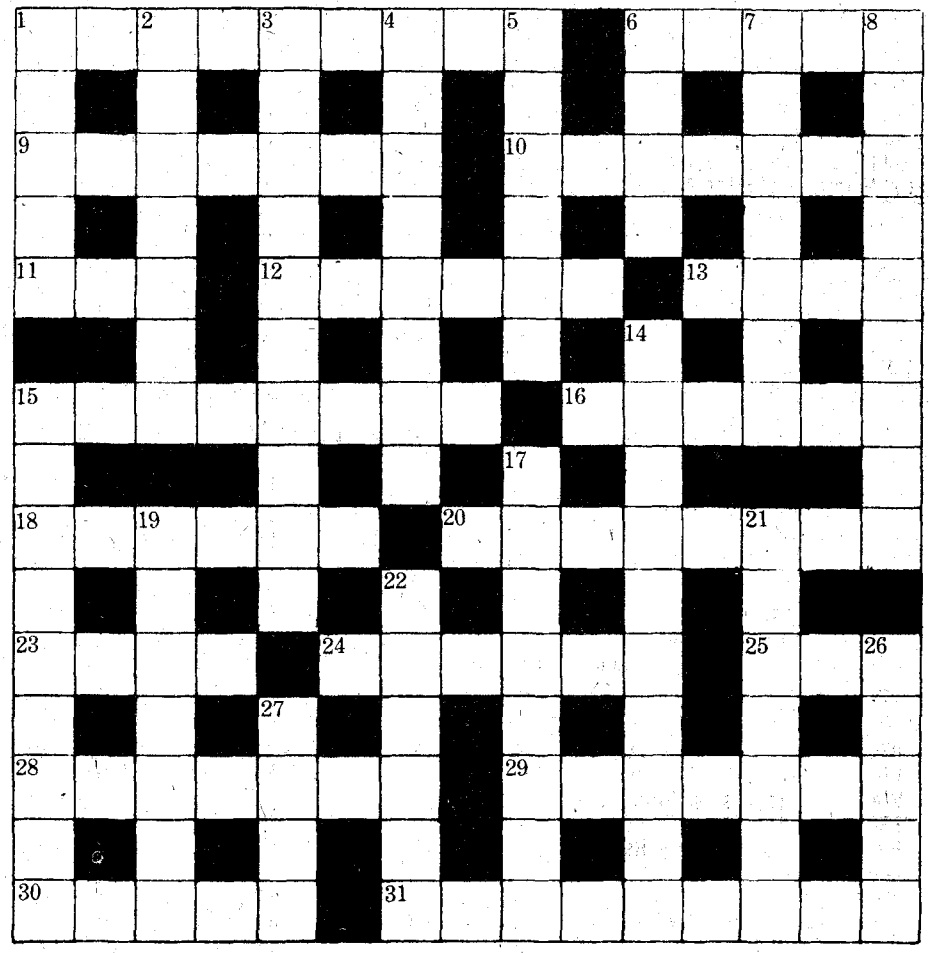
It is interesting to reflect on the violence of the reactions to Foucault and his colleagues. What makes them so infuriating? Critics such as Robinson make much of their opacity and of their failure to cite evidence. I myself find that one can come to terms with the French taste for putting poetry in science by understanding its function: In order to put into question assumptions deeply embedded in our ordinary language, one has to use language in extraordinary ways.

As for the question of evidence, again we must look at the author's purpose. Foucault (at least in this first volume of his *History of Sexuality*) does not build his case through amassing empirical evidence. But there is a real question about the kind of evidence that should be required to support a thesis such as "the repressive hypothesis reassures the critics of capitalism and supports mythologians of future utopias." Foucault's enterprise, like that of the psychoanalyst or literary critic, would be shut down in advance if forced to submit to criteria of evidence borrowed from other disciplines.

But I believe that there is another and perhaps more fundamental element in Foucault's capacity to infuriate. It is very hard to cope with theories which include an explanation of why we might reject them. It is as though in rejecting them we prove their truth. The classic example of such a closed system is psychoanalysis, but we find this same circular pattern in Foucault's work. He claims that he speaks truths about power which are unacceptable in much the same way as Freud believed that his theory of infantile sexuality was unacceptable, an unassimilable element which made psychoanalysis a subversive doctrine. Times have changed. A version of the theory of infantile sexuality has become a commonplace. But if there is any doctrine which threatens us today as Freud's theory of sexuality threatened the Victorians, it must surely lie in the direction of questioning man's autonomy. □

Crossword Puzzle No. 1758

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Don't win with Mr. Basie—you'll have to start all over again, if you do. (4,5)
6 See 26 down
9 Supports those like the Nation type of reformer. (7)
10 Chief caption pied? (7)
11, 12 and 13 See 27 down
15 Transportation expenses for sports devotees, or just part of the procession? (8)
16 You must see the river here when you bang into it. (6)
18 One way to pay people back with writing material in large quantity. (2,4)
20 Did one do wrong to hold out something around the finish? (8)
23 Scrapers for shoe repairing? (4)
24 Concerning historic food? (6)
25 Pass one with eagles shortly? (3)
28 Lots of steps might be taken at airports. (7)
29 Wheeler might be doing this as well. (7)
30 In Africa, they obviously have different goals. (5)
31 When flu is bad, a university official comes around to make a shining example. (9)

DOWN

1 Permitted over a hundred to get landed around it. (5)
2 The operator, possibly, to rush ahead? (7)
3 Might it represent China's bill for possible symptoms of illness? (10)
4 Is the US ending such without a name? (8)
5 High gear, obviously. (3,3)
6 Quarterdeck? Not for such a seaman! (4)
7 Thurber's was seen in the garden. (7)
8 A blend of coffee, sir, that made many a meal perfect! (9)
14 What one hits on the table, the evident purpose being to dance. (6,4)
15 Does one consider it shocking, or just loud and appropriate. (9)
17 See 27 down
19 See 28 down
21 Refuse to go down? (7)
22 One who rents things out has the smaller amount, alternatively. (6)
26, 6 across and 9 down One doesn't necessarily take care of the beacon with this—it's just a domestic chore. (5, 12)
27, 17 down, 11, 12 and 13 across Associated with a well-known musical trio. (The protagonist was a blow-hard!) (4,6,2,3,3,3,4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1757

ACROSS: 1 Cryptanalysis; 10 Somme; 11 Capuchins; 12 Artemisia; 13 Trace; 14 Intransigent; 19 Opera glasses; 22 Togas; 24 Accretion; 25 On the town; 26 Alive; 27 English setter. DOWN: 2 and 17 Remote control; 3 Pneumonia; 4 Ancestral; 5 Alpha; 6 Yacht; 7 Imitated; 8 Asian; 9 Aspects; 15 Nose-cones; 16 Inelegant; 18 Heighten; 20 Divide; 21 Infer; 23 Shell; 24 Atoms.

Readers are invited to send for a free copy of Mr. Lewis's "ground rules." Address Puzzle Department, *The Nation*, 333 Sixth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10014.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CLASSIFIED.

Go National with The Nation's Classifieds: You can reach a large audience of discriminating, educated and concerned readers throughout the United States at very reasonable rates. We charge $3 per line (45 characters or spaces)—two line minimum. Take advantage of our special offer: place an order for three insertions of your ad, and we will print a fourth insertion free! Please enclose payment and send to Lindsey Weinraub c/o The Nation.

PUBLICATIONS

TECHNOCRACY—Technological Social Design" available for one dollar from Technocracy Inc., Continental Headquarters, Savannah, Ohio 44874.

READ THE GUARDIAN—newsweekly gives Marxist viewpoint on national and international news. Special 6-week trial subscription, $1. Full year $17. GUARDIAN, Dept. N, 33 West 17th Street, New York City 10011.

LIFE AFTER DEATH? Swedenborg's incredible 27-year experience detailed in HEAVEN and HELL. (426 pages). $2.50 postpaid—Swedenborg Foundation, Dept. NA, 139 East 23rd Street, New York, New York 10010

VIETNAM: ESSAYS, translations, reviews. 10th anniversary issue. $3.50. BULLETIN OF CONCERNED ASIAN SCHOLARS, Box W, Charlemont, MA 01339.

ORDER like Zeus is gone and **CHAOS**, like King Whirl reigns in his stead. How to cope? Read Whiteford Boyle's **BEYOND THE PRESENT PROSPECT:** The XXth Century's Scientific Revolution's Impact on Religious Experience. WHEAT FORDER'S PRESS, Box 6317, Washington, DC 20015. Favorably reviewed in "Choice." $5/10 postpaid.

THE NORTH AMERICAN MENTOR MAGAZINE is still the most lively little literary magazine in America. $11 for four 1979 numbers. Annual poetry contests since 1964. Cash awards. $2 for poetry contest rules and sample copy. Write: N.A., Mentor, Fennimore, Wis. 53809.

'THE PRESS AND THE BAY OF PIGS'
A detailed study by
Victor Bernstein and Jesse Gordon
Single copies—15¢; 25 copies at 10¢ each
Orders over 25 at 7¢ per copy
THE NATION
333 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10014

LITERARY SERVICES

OUT-OF-PRINT bookfinder. Box 5842NA, High Point, N.C. 27262. Send wants.

PUBLISH YOUR BOOK! Join our successful authors. Publicity, advertising, beautiful books. All subjects invited. Send for fact-filled booklet and free manuscript report. Carlton Press, Dept. 84 Fifth Avenue, New York 10011.

POETRY

WITH HOW SAD STEPS, O MOON, thou climb'st the skies. Sign up for the Sad Poets Series. Nation, Box 11.

CROSSWORDS

The Nation's Best Crossword Puzzles
Book #4 is now out. Send $3.50 (postpaid) to E.S. Lewis, 35 Main St., Apt. 1, Fairhaven, Mass. 02719. Or send $8 for a set of all four books by Frank Lewis.

CUSTOM CROSSWORDS
Individually made for your conventions, retreats, anniversaries, family occasions! Personalized terms, names, in-jokes, etc. Camera-ready. Write: Custom Crosswords, Carol Bly, NR Odin House, Madison, Minnesota 56256.

EMPLOYMENT

EDITOR, WRITER, PROOFREADER. Experience on **New York Times** and many other journals, seeks part-time editorial work 1-2 days a week. Write Nation Box 642.

DISTRIBUTE RAND MCNALLY ROAD MAPS . . . High Profits . . . Low Wholesale Prices . . . Dealerships available . . . AmeriMap, 734 Marquette Bank Building, Rochester MN (507) 288-6477.

PROFESSIONAL TYPIST seeks employment. Freelance typing and tape transcription. Experienced high speed typist-stenographer. Pickup and delivery available NYC. Call (212) 744-5935.

RADCLIFFE GRAD, BA ENGLISH, library experience, extensive knowledge of broadcasting history. Excellent writing skills, seeks literary or television employment. Write Nation, Box 203.

PRODUCTION ARTIST seeks in-house position. Heavy photo and camera ready art exp. BA in philosophy, MA in Design. Write Nation, Box 84.

EDITORIAL SERVICES—Free-lance rewrite, editing, proofreading. 212-287-0026 or write Nation, Box 122.

HARVARD AB PSYCHOLOGY experienced in business administration, grant-seeking, and financial planning. Superior writing and research skills. Write Nation Box 103.

FOR SALE

FOR SALE—Pitney Bowes No. 502 Copy Machine. Call Ann Epstein: 212-242-8400.

PHOTOGRAPHY

COMPLETE PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICES—Experienced photographer and teacher. Studio or location. Instruction available for all ages. Bob Helmond, 212-284-4079 or write Nation, Box 124.

CLASSIFIED

$3.00 per line/2 line minimum;
6 words (45 characters or spaces) per line.
Payment must accompany all orders.
Send to Classified Dept., The Nation,
333 Sixth Avenue, NYC 10014.

PERSONALS

SINGLE BOOKLOVERS gets cultured, single, widowed or divorced persons acquainted. Est. 1970. Nationwide. Write Box AE, Swarthmore, PA 19081.

QUIET WOMAN, 40s, animal lover, seeks friendship with man of similar gentle qualities. Enjoy poetry, anthropology, and naif art. Non-smoker. Reply Nation Box 121.

Lawyer, mid-thirties, looking for a level-headed woman with MA. Reply, Nation Box 13.

WIDOW, 60, N. SMOKER, N. Drinker, Fin. Secure, wants to share her home, garden, car, etc. with Fin. Secure Gentleman. P.O. Box 6027, S.L.C. Utah 84106

Unattached man, free-wheeling, happy-go-lucky, footloose, carefree, irresponsible but terribly charming, seeks company of agreeable woman for his West Coast vacation, coming up in February. Late twenties, early thirties. Respond Nation, Box 781.

DEEPLY COMMITTED to the left, literature, and love; woman, 28, seeks acquaintance with man of similar age whose mind runs on a similar course. Can also keep house and darn socks, of course. Write Nation, Box 6.

UNCLE WIGGLY, Happy Belated Birthday from Flow Bear and True Foe.

MISCELLANEOUS

SUNBELT INVESTMENT LETTER. Indispensable in the new investment era. Trial $10. P.O. Box 6863, Denver, Colo. 80206.

NEED READERS? If you want to reach people who care about the nation, try the Nation's classifieds.

THINK about this. It costs you nothing. No one likes Hunger and Sickness. If all people in the World will pray for one hour—simultaneously—for an end to Hunger and Sickness, it will be done. And you do not have to be "religious" for your prayers to be answered. Let's do it soon.

CASSETTE TAPE FEATURES: RALPH NADER, American Indians, Feminism, Busing, Nuclear Energy, Drugs, Police Spying, The CIA, Food Co-ops. Tapes: $4.95 Impact Tapes, Box 2278, Inglewood, Cal. 90305.

HOW TO START that diesel engine in cold weather. Information; Deisel Start, P.O. Box 2079, Michigan City, Ind. 46360.

DEEP THROAT WANTED: Anybody with information on the tobacco companies' efforts to gear up for the inevitable legalization of marijuana. Call 212-781-8214 after 9 p.m. All information will be held in strict confidence.

THE VOYAGE OUT. I'm looking for either the 1920 Harcourt, Brace edition or the Hogarth Press edition of this Virginia Woolf novel. If you have any info, please write Nation, Box 74. Price negotiable.

ADOPT A PET THIS WEEK: Free spaying; free shots. Visit our lovely shelter. (Non-profit—contributions tax-deductible); open every day, including Sat. and Sun. til 9 pm. North Shore Animal League, South St., Port Washington, L.I. 516/883-7575—only 5 mins. from Exit 36, L.I. Expressway.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One Cure for Cancer

Cancer kills about one thousand Americans a day, almost 400,000 a year. To combat this killer, thousands of scientists are working hard to understand the exact mechanism of cancer and develop cures.

Laboratory research is vital, but we must fight cancer on other fronts, as well. After all, many causes of cancer are well known: cigarettes, air and water pollutants, radioactive materials, certain food additives. In these cases, the cancer battle is really a political one, one of regulating industries that market hazardous products (and that have great political influence).

The ultimate cure for our cancer problem is to *prevent* cancer from developing, rather than *curing* it after it has found a victim. Considering the size and power of the cancer-promoting industries, prevention is certain to be as much a political effort as a scientific one.

Son of Red 2

When the FDA outlawed Red dye No. 2 two years ago, companies turned to another coal tar dye, Red No 40. The new dye is used in soda pop, gelatin desserts, candy, and most other artificially colored red and orange foods. We (and our pets) eat over one million pounds of this synthetic dye every year.

Unfortunately, Red No. 40 was not adequately tested when it was approved by FDA in 1971. Because it was so poorly tested, the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) asked FDA in 1976 to ban the dye until it was proven safe. Since then, two tests on mice indicate that the dye promotes cancer.

One FDA pathologist has concluded, according to an internal FDA memo, that "Red No. 40 has behaved as a carcinogen." But higher-ups at FDA are maintaining that the dye is safe. Until it is banned, consumers should make a special effort to avoid red and orange dyed foods.

Red No. 40 is a classic example of FDA approving a poorly tested chemical, then permitting its continued use even after tests indicate a risk. One cure for Red No. 40 and other cancer-promoting additives is strong citizens' groups, which can awaken the bureaucrats and stand up to industry.

Fat, Too?

Steak, bacon, butter, and other foods that are rich in saturated fat have been known for years to contribute to heart disease. The latest new studies indicate that a diet rich in fat (any kind of fat) also increases the risk of bowel and breast cancer, two of the three major cancers. The American diet is one of the fattiest in the world. Judging from the past, we can safely predict that the meat, dairy, and vegetable oil industries will never admit the fat-cancer link, but will demand more and more studies . . . as the tobacco industry has done with lung disease. When profits are at stake, there is never enough evidence.

Concerned citizens can improve their health by eating a diet low in fat. CSPI will help by arming people with information and by pressing the government to require more informative food labels and ads to make the shopper's job easier.

Does Everything Cause Cancer?

What with DDT, Red No. 2, PCBs, asbestos, and other widely used chemicals having been found to cause cancer, it sometimes seems that *everything* causes cancer.

In fact, though, *most* chemicals do not cause cancer. You can feed enormous amounts of most chemicals to animals and they will not develop cancer. This even includes most pesticides and food additives.

Industry has marketed thousands of new chemicals in recent decades. Most of the chemicals are safe. However, a number of cancer-causing products are widely used. The task now before society is to restrict the use of these products and prevent new carcinogens from being marketed. Alarms about newly identified carcinogens should be cause for hope and optimism, not helpless despair, because they indicate that private watchdog groups and government agencies are finally tracking down the culprits.

One Cure . . . CSPI

The non-profit Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) is fighting cancer, heart disease, and other health problems, as well as irresponsibility in government.

In recent months, CSPI's scientific and legal experts have urged the FDA to ban Red No. 40 dye and other unsafe additives . . . petitioned the FTC to ban ads for sugary foods on children's TV . . . pressed FDA to inform pregnant women that caffeine may cause miscarriages or birth defects. . . and pushed for food labeling that says how much fat and sugar are actually in the food. CSPI publishes factual, attractive books, posters, and a magazine about food, the food industry, and the government regulation of food. CSPI also originated and sponsored National Food Day for three years and disclosed links between nutrition professors and the food industry.

If you are tired of having your stomach and your government controlled by the giant foodmakers, won't you join our fight to build better food and health policies?

Join C.S.P.I.

CSPI, Dept. M, 1755 S St. NW,
Washington, DC 20009

I would like to join CSPI. Enclosed is my $15 membership fee, which entitles me to a free Nutrition Scoreboard poster, 12 issues of "Nutrition Action" magazine, and a 10% discount on all CSPI publications.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

$ _____ additional donation enclosed

FTC LIBRARY
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED